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Christmas gift suggestions ...p. 17

Gazeti Daktari:
a doctor's newsletter...p. 10

60th year of publication



The Gomery Report: sinners, cynics and symbiosis

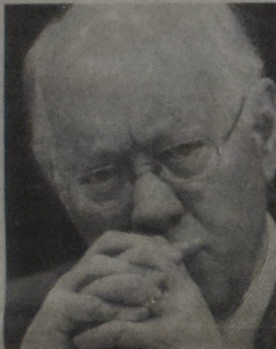
Harry der Nederlanden

As we prepare to go to press (Nov. 10), it looks as if the one thing to come out of the Gomery Inquiry (at an expenditure of over \$30 million) may be an election almost no one wants. Actually, it may not be that terribly inappropriate to have an election campaign around Christmas, reduced as it is to a celebration of giving.

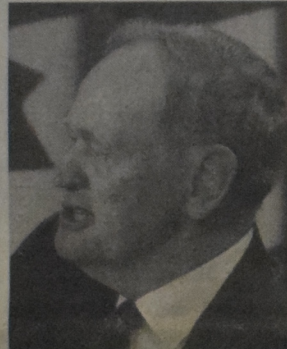
After all, each of our major parties strives to present itself as the Santa Claus who will be most generous in giving us, the childlike public, our heart's desire. If called upon, none of our leaders – not Paul Martin, Stephen Harper or Jack Layton – will risk playing the Grinch who stole Christmas. All of them will don a liberal red Santa suit and go ho-ho-ing across the country to the sound of sleigh bells and cash registers, making a list and checking it twice and then adding more to the long list of government largesse.

Perhaps all Canadian elections ought to be held around Christmas; it nicely reflects the Canadian view of government.

Behind the scenes, however, none of the parties are in a Christmas mood to give anything to any of the others. Layton has been all but blackmailing Martin to get what he wants – a prohibition against any further privatization of health services. Nor does Layton want to give Harper an advantage by being the one to bring down the Liberal government and thereby force an unwanted election. The same is true of Harper, who would be happy to paint Layton as an opportunist rather than the disinterested statesman he has been playing. Perhaps Harper is



Gomery and Cretien



also dithering because the outrage of the Canadian electorate about Liberal corruption does not seem to go very deep or last very long. After a steep drop in popularity post-Gomery Report, the Liberals made an equally stunning recovery less than two weeks later.

In an Ipsos Reid Poll conducted right after the airing of the Gomery Report, about 54 percent of Canadians believe the findings “show that the Liberal party is fundamentally corrupt and does not deserve to be re-elected.” And even though support for the Liberal Party plummeted and people said they were eager to get rid of the Liberals, 55 percent favored Martin's plan to hold off calling an election until 30 days after Judge Gomery releases his final report in February, 2006. Despite Liberal promises to clean up government, a strong majority (60 percent) believe the Gomery report will do little to change the way it will do business in the future. Only 34 percent expressed hope that things would change for the better.

Greed, venality and misconduct

Ironically, as Canadians awaited the findings of the Gomery Inquiry, the corruption watchdog Transparency International ranked

Canada among the top 20 cleanest countries in the world, although it indicated that we were perceived to be backsliding. Apparently the failure of some of our politicians and bureaucrats to distinguish more carefully between the public purse and their own pales in comparison to the sort of corruption happening elsewhere. Two other countries in the top 20 – Britain and the U.S. – are also sorting out scandals of various proportions, providing plenty of fodder for reporters, critics, cartoonists, gossip columnists,

preachers and editors – all of whom, of course, live exemplary lives.

Judge Gomery summed up his voluminous report, drawn from some 25,000 pages of transcripts from 170 witnesses, as “a depressing story of multiple failures to plan a government program appropriately and to control waste – a story of greed, venality and misconduct both in government and advertising, all of which contributed to the loss and misuse of huge amounts of money at the expense of Canadian taxpayers.”

Our decisive Prime Minister Paul Martin did not dither. He promptly accepted and affirmed the conclusions of the Gomery Report, which exonerated him of all wrongdoing and laid the burden of blame

at the door of his predecessor and former rival, Jean Chretien. In addition, he promised to return the \$1.14 million in kickbacks that had been added to the Liberal Party coffers by Adscam and referred the Report to the RCMP to ascertain whether further charges were to be laid. Then he dished out harsh punishment to the guiltiest of the participants: he banished them from membership in the Liberal Party for life, surely the equivalent of being banished to the outer darkness.

Sins of omission and commission

The Gomery Report taught us little more than we had already learned during the hearings
See Gomery on page 3...

The French riots: rooted in racism and poverty – or Islamic jihad?

Harry der Nederlanden

It began in one of the hundreds of immigrant suburbs of Paris as an outburst of anger at the electrocution deaths of two youths. The two youths may or may not have been running from the police when they jumped over a fence into a high voltage area.

As a neighborhood riot, it was hardly a major story and did not make the international news. A couple of dozen cars were incinerated, but that was hardly unusual in these ethnic suburbs. Even before this series of riots, some 28,000 cars had already been torched in France since the beginning of the year.

The foreign press did not begin to pay attention until the riots had continued several nights in a row



and had begun to spread, first to several neighboring suburbs and then to more and more cities until

police were battling rioters in over 300 different towns. After ten days,
See French riots on page 2...

News

French Riots *continued from page 1*

hundreds of cars were being torched every night as well as shops, schools, buses and factories.

Night after night the TV cameras showed police hunching behind plastic shields as gangs of youths hurled rocks and molotov cocktails and firemen ran themselves ragged trying to extinguish all the fires. Quite a number of policemen have been injured in the encounters, some struck by buckshot fired from shotguns. Meanwhile, French politicians quarreled about who was to blame for the situation and what to do about it. Not until the rioters had rampaged for 11 nights running did the government finally act to impose a curfew.

Ethnic ghettos

Television and newspapers reports described the suburbs in which the immigrants live as "slum areas," "ethnic ghettos," "grim housing projects" in which people live in crowded conditions, in dilapidated apartments, and where life is "an ugly stew of poverty, discrimination and desperation." The riots may have been sparked by the two deaths, but the roots of the violence and vandalism is in the unemployment (double the national average of 10 percent), the poverty and the desperation and "disaffection" of immigrant youth who suffer severe discrimination in France. The overriding theme of the mainstream media as stated by the Associated Press: "The unrest laid bare France's failure to fully integrate its millions of immigrants."

According to stories published a few days later, many of the neighborhoods have long been so-called "no-go" areas for the French police, ruled by gangs and drug dealers, where the residents are hostile to all outsiders, not just the police. Recently, however, France's interior minister Sarkozy declared that this situation cannot continue, that the immigrant communities must be subject to the same order as the rest of the country. The stricter enforcement resulted in "harrassment" of immigrant youth, and they seized this opportunity to vent their anger and defiance.

Youth interviewed by the dozens of camera crews on the scene often mentioned Sarkozy as the target of their anger. He referred to those who have been dealing drugs and torching cars as "rabble" or "scum," and he ordered the police to crack down on lawlessness in the suburbs. The media ran with that picture of insulted, angry youth and at times made it sound as if the government were to blame for starting the riots.

Although the French have long prided themselves on their lack of racial discrimination (in contrast to the Americans), many commentators also cite racism as a root cause of the riots. The vast majority of the immigrants are from North Africa, and their children and grandchildren are still referred to as immigrants. They were settled in government-subsidized housing on the outskirts



Sarkozy

of Paris, that is, in the suburbs. As was the case in the Netherlands, they were welcomed at a time when the European economy was booming and there was a demand for factory workers. Most of those jobs, however, have disappeared, and whatever jobs do open up are often temporary or part-time.

Housing decent

Several journalists (decidedly in the minority) have taken issue with this racial/economic interpretation of the roots of the rioting. They point out that the characterization of the neighborhoods as dilapidated slums is not at all accurate. The housing is not attractive and modest but decent, especially when compared to American slums. Nor are the residents left to fend for themselves. France is very much a welfare state. Nidra Poller, writing in the *National Post*, points out that this is more an indicator of the ideology of many mainstream journalists, who invariably locate social unrest in economic deprivation. However, the French provide well for their urban poor.

Craig Smith, reporting for the *New York Times* also says that the housing is adequate, welfare programs extensive and the schools good. "Even when employed, a family of four living in government-subsidized housing typically pays only a few hundred dollars a month in rent and can receive more than \$1,200 a month in various subsidies. The unemployed receive even more. Healthcare and education are free."

So it seems safe to say that economic deprivation is certainly not the only cause and probably not the root cause.

Battle for Eurabia?

There is also a vocal group of journalists, mostly on the right, who see the violence as rooted in religion. Many of them have been warning about the threat of Muslim radicalism for some time. Writers like Daniel Pipes, Mark Steyn and Robert Spencer see the riots as part of a much larger "clash of civilizations." Some speak of it as another form of jihad, a revolution against the famous values of the French Revolution, or the first skirmishes in the struggle for Eurabia (Steyn). They fume at the blindness of mainstream liberal journalism to see the religious, ideological roots of the unrest.

Robert Spencer, author of several books, including *Onward Muslim Soldiers: How Ji-*

had Still Threatens America and the West, wrote: "One might get the impression from [the mainstream media] that France is governed by top-hatted, cigar-smoking capitalists, building their fortunes on the backs of the poor, rather than by socialists who have actually strained the economy by spending huge amounts of money on health and welfare programs."

While liberal analysts fault the French authorities for attempting to force assimilation, Spencer says the contrary is true. All over Europe, in the name of difference and multiculturalism governments have bent over backwards to allow the Muslim communities to retain their own identities, language and even to some extent their own laws. They have cooperated with Muslim leaders in the formation of enclaves where Muslim rather than Western values prevailed.

He quotes Dyab Abou Jahjah, founder of the Arab European League, who was charged with inciting Muslims in Antwerp to riot in 2002, and who declared: "Assimilation is cultural rape. It means renouncing your identity, becoming like the others."

Spencer concludes: "He implied that European Muslims had a right to bring the ideology of jihad and Sharia to Europe," and goes on to interpret the riots as part of a wider aggression by Muslims to impose their values and laws in Europe.

Daniel Pipes writes in apocalyptic terms about "the end of an era," as the upsurge of radical Islam coincides with the drastic decline of Christian belief, a shrinking population of native (white) Frenchmen, and a welfare system that is sapping the economy. The diffuse violence spreading from France, he suggests, is another form of jihad—alongside of random violent attacks like those against the London subway and the targeting of certain individuals like Theo van Gogh.

A more careful analysis of the French riots, however, suggests that the thesis of an orchestrated, religion-driven jihad is highly dubious. Despite occasional cries of "Allelu akhbar!" journalists have for the most part found that the youth most active in the riots are not motivated by religion. In fact, many of them are infrequent visitors to the local mosques. Only five percent of French Muslims attend mosque once a week or more. One French scholar of Islam observed that the riots have less the character of a religious war than that of "a local sport, a rite of passage."

Alexis Debat, editor of *The National Interest*, noted that in areas where radical Islam was strong, there was actually less violence. Moreover, the Muslim leadership issued a fatwa declaring that participation in the riots was contrary to Islam.

However, this does not mean

that religion has not played a fundamental role in forming the situation that has given rise to the riots. John Carrey, a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, surmises that because of the riots Muslim organizations will now get more political clout in France, for they alone are able to act as mediators to restore order. However, what they preach and teach is a form of isolationism from French society. "They are promoting a separate society within society," he says.

The mainstream talk of ghettos and "disaffected youth" has a certain validity, then, but it is an alienation that comes as much from the side of the Muslim community as from the French. In order to preserve their religion, Islamic leaders, both moderate and radical, seek to warn their youth against the seductions of Western ways, which include for many democracy, women's equality and autonomy. On the other side, there is the radical secularism of French society that goes back to the French Revolution, also a species of religion. This ideology has proven incapable of making some sort of rapprochement with the eight percent of its population that rejects secularism and embraces Islam.

So although religion may play only a minor role as an immediate cause, the critics of the mainstream media are certainly right that it does play a crucial role—but at a deeper level.

Muslim youth are caught in a Catch 22: the more they follow the way of their leaders and Islamicize, the less they equip themselves for participation in Western society. The more alienation and discontent this breeds, the more they will seek to destroy that order. Yet, it was for the sake of that order and the opportunities it provides that their parents immigrated to Europe. So the more they are able to assert their will, the more they will subvert their own economic future.

The only hope for both sides is that they both change. There are many signs that the French are beginning to realize, in the words of one of France's leading thinkers, that "The whole system needs to be rethought." In the Muslim community, however, radical Islam is gaining adherents faster than those moderates who are seeking some form of accommodation with the West.



Politics

Gomery *continued from page 1*

themselves. It only added to the pages of testimony and fact collected Gomery's interpretation of the events. He pointed unwaveringly at Chretien's top aide, Jean Pelletier as one of those most responsible for the misuse of public funds. This interpretation brings the scandal awfully close to the office of the former prime minister himself, and Gomery did not shrink from holding Jean Chretien responsible.

This does not mean, however, that the Report found either Chretien or Pelletier were actually guilty of directing Adscam and thus guilty of criminal wrongdoing. On that score, Chretien, too, was exonerated. The person most directly involved, concluded Gomery was Jacques Carrière, a close friend of Chretien, who ran "an elaborate kickback scheme" to fund the Liberal Party in Quebec, as well as lining his own pockets. So Chretien and Pelletier were accused more of sins of omission than any sins of commission. By way of sins of commission, as expected, Alfonso Gagliano and Charles Guite figured very prominently in the drama as interpreted by Gomery, for they were directly involved with the Quebec ad firms in scamming the government. About \$147 million went to ad agencies, of which a great deal was misspent, and over \$1.1 million came back to the Liberal Party.

The Quebec wing of the Liberal Party was also singled out: "Two successive executive directors were directly involved in illegal campaign financing, and many of its workers accepted cash payments for their services when they should have known that such payments were in violation of the Canada Elections Act."

The Report says the five agencies specifically identified as sponsorship pillagers indulged in systematic overbilling and conflicts of interest, failed to fulfil obligations, charged for work not performed, and other dubious practices. All of them also contributed to the financing of the Liberal party in implicit expectation of being rewarded with government contracts.

"The negligent administration of the sponsorship program by the (Public Works Department) opened the door wide to profiteering by those five agencies and their owners, and they took full advantage of the opportunity,"



concludes the Report.

According to the "executive summary," the commission of inquiry found:

- clear evidence of political involvement in the administration of the sponsorship program;
 - insufficient oversight at the very senior levels of the public service which allowed program managers to circumvent proper contracting procedures and reporting lines;
 - a veil of secrecy surrounding the administration of the sponsorship program and an absence of transparency in the contracting process;
 - reluctance, for fear of reprisal, by virtually all public servants to go against the will of a manager who was circumventing established policies and who had access to senior political officials;
 - gross overcharging by communication agencies for hours worked and goods and services provided;
 - inflated commissions, production costs and other expenses charged by communication agencies and their subcontractors, many of which were related businesses;
 - the use of the sponsorship program for purposes other than national unity or federal visibility because of a lack of objectives, criteria and guidelines for the program;
 - deliberate actions to avoid compliance with federal legislation and policies...
- And more, including:
- the existence of a "culture of entitlement" among political officials and bureaucrats involved

with the sponsorship program, including the receipt of monetary and non-monetary benefits.

Looking (cynically) to the future

In his second report, which he intends to deliver Feb. 1, Gomery will focus on how to fix government to prevent another such scandal. According to analysts, it will discuss the idea of "ministerial accountability." It is under this rubric that ministers and their deputies – including Chretien and Pelletier – are accountable for everything in their department, including its management and direction. In the wake of Adscam, many have argued that departments are so large that ministers can't know everything, so they shouldn't have to held responsible for the mismanagement of underlings if they don't know about it.

Gomery's clearly does not buy this argument. He insists that ministers are responsible for ensuring their departments have the right controls and staff to spot problems so they cannot avoid responsibility by arguing "wilful ignorance."

John Ibbitson, columnist for the *Globe and Mail* wrote: "The corrosive effects of the sponsorship scandal will continue to eat away at the Liberal Party and at the country for months and years to come."

"It is once again total war between the current and former prime ministers and their supporters. Mr. Chretien's legal challenge, and his defiant

allegation of bias on the part of the commission, will tear at Liberal unity and popularity up to and beyond the next election.

"Thanks to this scandal, the Liberals have lost Quebec, perhaps for good."

Andrew Cohen, a professor of journalism and international affairs at Carleton University, sounded a note of caution:

"[Gomery's] job isn't just tracing the money trail, identifying wrong-doing, revisiting ministerial responsibility and recommending new methods of accountability and transparency, all of which he will do.

"More broadly, it is striking a note of sobriety in defending the effectiveness of government against those who would disparage it. It is dismissing that easy and noxious cynicism that public servants are inept, that politicians are liars and that politics in Quebec is corrupt. In the hothouse of minority government, Judge Gomery must be measured and judicious...."

It is a good thing that this incident of corruption has been uncovered. The Conservatives have introduced measures designed

to prevent a similar thing from happening again. But we must not begin to think that this has revealed the day-to-day workings of government in Canada.

Many commentators like Ibbitson, however, are cynical about the prospects of rooting out the close connections between government and big business and the "culture of entitlement." Government has increasingly become less focused on matters of justice and more on economics. Politicians need the big bucks for their election campaigns and government has become a prime source of business for many corporations, so a symbiosis has developed between the two. Keeping such interaction at a distance is becoming increasingly difficult for governments everywhere. But even worse than the occasional scandal would be a general mood of cynicism among citizens that this is simply business as usual, that everyone does it.

That is not true. The Gomery Inquiry at least implies that it is still possible to distinguish honest from dishonest dealings between the public and the private sectors.

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Guest Editorial

Civilization under siege – the riots in Paris

Albert Mohler

"Civilization is hideously fragile," argued C. P. Snow. "There's not much between us and the horrors underneath, just about a coat of varnish."

Snow's statement takes on ominous overtones in light of the raging riots in and around Paris. Over the past nearly two weeks, demonstrations, rioting, car burnings, and various other acts of violence have spread throughout the suburban enclaves where the city's ethnic minorities – mostly immigrants from North Africa – are congregated. The violence is not limited to France. Similar violence has erupted in Brussels and other European cities. Clearly, something has gone horribly wrong.

Even as many in the Western media attempt to downplay the extent and nature of this violence, the smoke is spreading, and the debris is mounting. The world has watched as France has been thrown into a state of emergency, with riots, street fighting, and arson enveloping entire neighborhoods. The weak, slow, and confused response of the French government has only exacerbated the problem. Even as the government declared a state of emergency, French authorities still deny the extent of the disorder.

For years now, observers have warned that Europe has put itself in a position of tremendous vulnerability. Even as European birth rates have fallen below population replacement levels, immigrants, largely from Muslim lands, have been eagerly received and put to work. In one sense, many Western European nations built the economic expansions they experienced during the 1960s and 1970s on a base of immigrant labor.

Now, France and its neighboring countries are reaping what they have sown. The economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s has been replaced with economic stagnation and rampant unemployment. The young men now rioting in the streets of Paris represent the second generation of immigrants, and they face a bleak future with little hope of gaining jobs or a chance to obtain the European vision of happiness and prosperity.

Furthermore, they don't want to embrace that European worldview in the first place. To a far greater extent than their parents, these second-generation inhabitants of

minority enclaves want to reassert their Islamic identity and force their agenda upon the nation.

France is now home to an estimated six million Muslims, most of African descent. This Muslim population, the largest in Europe, represents almost one tenth of the total population of France. "The government hasn't really realized we're facing a major political crisis," said Patrick Lozes, president of the Circle for the Promotion of Diversity in France told *The Washington Post*. "The French social model is exploding."

Indeed, as *The Wall Street Journal* noted, "France is the main testing ground of the continent's ability to bring this rapidly growing minority into the fold." It's not going well.

The Europeans have prided themselves on rejecting America's concept of the "melting pot." Instead of assimilating immigrants into the larger national culture, France (along with most other Western European nations) has encouraged immigrants to maintain their own identity, language, and culture and has created a "salad bowl" model that now contributes to this civil strife.

Without doubt, the protests are linked to economic realities. Young men who have little opportunity for jobs and economic power can easily opt-out of the entire cultural project – especially when they were never invited to join in the first place. Unemployment among French citizens in their twenties now stands at twenty percent, and the unemployment rate for members of the country's minority population of the same age is forty percent. This alone is a recipe for disaster.

Nevertheless, the economic explanation is woefully insufficient. The rioters, often identified in the press as "youths," are agents of violent rage and social anarchy. As observer Mark Steyn comments, the riot is now taking on the shape of "a rather shrewd and disciplined campaign."

The urban terrorists who are rioting in France have taken their cues from terrorists in the Middle East, where car burnings and similar demonstrations of violence have become a means of routine political protest.

Paul Belien, writing from Belgium, suggests that France is no longer able to defend itself against the forces of barbarism. "Unlike their fathers, who came to France from Muslim countries, accepting that, whilst remaining Muslims themselves, they had come to live in a non-Muslim country, the rioters see France as their country," he explains. "They were born here. This land is their land. And since they are Muslims, this land, or at least a part of it, is Muslim as well."

Furthermore, Belien argues that the rioters are not driven by anger, but by hatred. These young agents of disorder do not merely hate their limited economic prospects, but the very civilization that has harbored them. "It is hatred," Belien insists. "Hatred caused not by injustice suffered, but stemming from a sense of superiority. The 'youths' do not blame the French, they despise them."

Steyn suggests that the widespread outbreak of violence in Paris and beyond represents "the start of a long Eurabian civil war." Steyn, along with other concerned observers, understands that Europe is heading for a Muslim future. After all, the Muslims are having babies at a rate that far exceeds native Europeans. Furthermore, they are driven by a clear political agenda, deep Islamic conviction, and a clear and coherent concept of what they want the culture to be – an Islamic state.

The French, on the other hand, while possessed of an enormous sense of cultural superiority, no longer possess a clear or coherent concept of what it means to be French. They stress tolerance, but have embraced forces of radical intolerance.

As Thomas Sowell explains, "In the name of tolerance, these countries have imported intolerance, of which growing antisemitism in Europe is just one example. In the name of respecting all cultures, Western nations have welcomed people who respect neither the cultures nor the rights of the population among whom they have settled."

Steyn's concept of "Eurabia" also points to the links between the violence in France and the simmering hatreds of the Middle East. For the last several decades, France has attempted to appease its Muslim citizens by supporting Arab governments, criticizing Israel, and offering financial assistance to radical groups such as Hamas. Presumably, the frustrated Muslim youth of France were to be thankful for the French government's support of Muslim extremism in the Middle East. What possessed the French to think that the extremism would remain outside its own borders?

The unrest in France should serve to underline the deep cultural commitments that are fundamental to civilization. No society can withstand the threat of rampant anarchy from within. Civilization is always an achievement – a work and project embraced and supported by the vast majority of citizens, who enter into a social compact for the common good.

France has struggled with these ideals ever since the French Revolution. Unlike the American Revolution, which was established upon an inherited Christian worldview and the conservative streams of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution was radical, violent, anarchic, and highly secular.

Indeed, secularism has been an official French project for most of the last two centuries. Even as the French revolutionaries replaced the cross on the altar of the Cathedral of Notre Dame with a likeness of the goddess Reason, the French have prided themselves on the highly secular nature of their cultural experiment.

From one angle, this experiment appears to be a radical success. After all, only a small minority of French citizens consider themselves active Christians. Christianity plays almost no public role in the nation and its public culture. On the other hand, it is now apparent that this secularism, so eagerly embraced as a national project, has left a huge vacuum in the soul of French civilization. Even as nature abhors a vacuum, a secular vacuum will not long survive. The Muslim youths now rampaging through the streets of Paris want to fill that vacuum with Muslim rage.

Writer Theodore Dalrymple speaks of "barbarians at the gates of Paris." Those who honor civilization and understand, like C. P. Snow, that civilization is "hideously fragile," must look to France with concern and soberness. Will European civilization soon be a thing of the past?

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr. is the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the flagship school of the Southern Baptist Convention. Time called him the "reigning intellectual of the evangelical movement in the U.S." He also writes a popular daily commentary on moral, cultural and theological issues at www.albertmohler.com

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Letters

Calvin & Bush

In the dutch there is a saying: God can use a crooked stick to make a straight hit. That's what happened when Calvin College changed from one speaker to another. A lot more people got involved in a good debate than if Calvin would have stayed with the original person. If the graduating class paid attention to this debate, a lot more will have been learned than if it would have been just a speech heard and forgotten.

So in a round about way, say thanks to Bush for causing a debate. Also I see a crooked stick with Bush in Iraq – but I have not yet seen what the straight hit will be like.

Jan Jansma
Port Alberni, B.C.

Re: "Sea-to-sea bike tour"

While the sea to sea bikers waited for all cyclists to line up side by side before dipping their tires in the Atlantic Ocean together is admirable and fitting, a more honest act of solidarity and unity would have been if the above article, that sang the praises of the success of the tour, would have at least acknowledged Elizabeth Woudsma's horrendous accident on July 26, 2005, as she was training for the tour and who is now permanently paralyzed as a result.

Or could it be we have difficulty acknowledging these "sad turns of events" as part and parcel of God's faithfulness and therefore leave it best unsaid?

Arlene Van Hove

Hamilton District Christian High students head south for Christmas

Impact, an extracurricular club at the Hamilton District Christian High School, has felt God's call to respond to the needs of the hurricane devastation caused by Rita and Katrina. Out of a total school population of about 600, 1/6 of the students are heading south during their Christmas break. There they will hope to connect with a needy faith community to be of assistance in a number of ways. Possibilities might include offering day care, cleanup and restoration, and spiritual ministry.

With a group of that size, a military form of organization is being used. The students will be divided into color coded platoons and will be housed in very sparse but safe conditions.

God has already blessed this overwhelming venture in many ways. Financial gifts are pouring in. Alumni students are eagerly joining the venture to lead the group and the faith community in prayer and worship.

At present the CRWRC is working very hard on our behalf to organize and orientate the group. Well over 30 Redemer students have also volunteered to come along as chaperones.

If you wish to partner with the venture, you can contribute financially. (If so, these cheques should be written out to the CRWRC on our HDCH's behalf. For further information, please contact Wil Kamphuis at (905) 648-6655.)



Pro-life is not enough

For just over three decades now – for as long as I have been aware of the abortion issue – I have considered myself pro-life. The premature birth of our daughter seven years ago reinforced this conviction, due to our experience of her pains and joys when she should still have been in the womb. Nevertheless, I have resisted the notion that one should vote only for the obviously pro-life candidate at election time. Why?

To be sure, I do not accept the reasoning of those who, following the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago, claim to adhere to a "seamless garment" approach linking together abortion, capital punishment, warfare and poverty as pro-life issues. Good people can disagree on the best way to address poverty, on whether to wage war in contingent circumstances, and on whether the death penalty is proper retribution for those who have taken innocent life. However, the abortion issue is qualitatively different. Here disagreement revolves around, not *how best to protect* the unborn child, but *whether* to do so at all. For this reason those attempting to tie such different issues together sow confusion.

At the same time, there are professed pro-lifers who are so preoccupied with this single issue that they are in danger of overlooking the intrinsic worth of political order itself as a gift of God. Some would seemingly risk bringing down this order if it would serve to prevent one more abortion. Yet John Calvin writes of civil government that "Its function among men is no less than that of bread, water, sun, and air; indeed, its place of honor is far more excellent."

Even when government tolerates specific injustices, it nevertheless plays a crucial larger role in the maintenance and flourishing of human social life. Although it would take too much space to recall every possible way it does this, it is worth pointing out six basic tasks: (1) to uphold the public legal framework within which a variety of human activities take place; (2) to defend life, liberty and property; (3) to protect the diversity of human communities; (4) to care for the commons,



Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

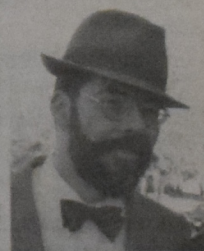
that is, the shared patrimony of the body politic; (5) to temper the harsh edges of the economic marketplace; and (6) to assume some responsibility for the economically disadvantaged.

The fact that a given government fails to, say, defend the lives of all the unborn or to protect marriage as a distinctive institution cannot by itself vindicate the single-issue voter, especially if the chosen issue is detached from a recognition of the larger task of government to do public justice. The 17th century political philosopher Thomas Hobbes was arguably pro-life in the sense that he believed the chief task of the sovereign to be the protection of his subjects' lives. Yet he also believed that the most effective government to this end was one ruled by a single will unconstrained by law. In short, Hobbes may have got that one issue right, but his overall understanding of government and its role was severely defective.

Fortunately, the vast majority of pro-lifers understand this and respect the institutions of government as the good gift of God. But when some ask their supporters, as one website does, to sign a pledge that they will vote only for pro-life candidates, they effectively ask them to overlook the importance of a variety of issues that may impact the well-being of the constitution as a whole. This is far from adequate as a coherent political agenda.

Of course, we have every reason to call ourselves pro-life and to defend the unborn to the best of our abilities. But we shouldn't use this label as an excuse to avoid the necessary but difficult job of thinking and working communally through the larger task of the state to do public justice.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and is the author of the award-winning *Political Visions and Illusions* (InterVarsity Press). His weblog can be found at: <http://byzantinecalvinist.blogspot.com/>.



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Anniversary

60th Anniversary: A guide for immigrants and a golden jubilee in Edmonton

Harry der Nederlanden

The Nov. 25, 1960 issue of CC carried a "Backward look" with Rev. Peter J. Hoekstra, "father of the newcomers," who was living in Calgary at the time. Hoekstra began his ministry in 1926 as a home missionary in Vancouver, and after a brief stint in the US in 1944 became minister of the Nobleford CRC, just prior to the big influx of Dutch immigrants.

In 1949 he became the Home Missionary for all of Alberta, where he helped a number of churches to get started. A year later Rev. J. Hanenburg was appointed to assist him.

In 1952 he traveled all the way to The Netherlands in search of pastors to minister to the new churches springing up all over Canada. At the time of the interview, he was about a year from retirement.

To help the newcomers, the CRC decided to publish a guide. Hoekstra was the chairman of the committee that wrote *The Guide: reliable information about church and society in Canada*, published in 1946 in Chatham, Ontario.

The Guide began by giving a biblical basis for immigration. Remember Abraham? God himself told Abraham to pack up his kist and head for Canada (oops - Canaan).

CC published some excerpts from the chapter called "Facts and experiences from the lives of Dutch settlers."

Vancouver

The area around Vancouver offers many opportunities for immigrants who wish to settle

Opening of Duncan Christian School



Rev. Peter J. Hoekstra

here. The price of land, including buildings, varies from \$400 to \$600 per acre. Skilled tradesmen such as carpenters, painters and mechanics earn a generous salary of between \$1.00 and \$1.50 per hour.

Abbotsford

We do not yet have our own church but attend the Christian Reformed Church in Sumas, Washington. Our group consists of 20 families. Our hope is that we will also get some of the immigrant families. [Tini van Ameyde, who interviewed Hoekstra, added that at the time the Abbotsford church consisted of 120 families and now had their own church.]

Houston

There's a great future here for families with boys between the ages of 14 and 19. The boys can work in the sawmills while they are learning farming skills. Those without capital can make a good beginning here, and, of course, those with money are also welcome.

Edmonton

Wages are higher than ever. Skilled tradesmen get from \$.85 to \$1.10 per hour and laborers \$.65 per hour. Land is expensive, costing from \$50 to \$100 per acre with buildings. Renting a farm is difficult, but a colony can be started in an area about 150 miles north of here.

The CRC has 54 families. There is a Christian School association but no school.

Monarch-Nobleford

Immigrants can best work in the sugar beets. Alberta needs some one thousand sugar beet workers and there is a demand for Dutchmen. Free housing, a garden and a shed for a cow are part of the deal. Most of those who apply themselves here can buy land after a few years and can make a good living.

Lacombe

The district of Rocky Mountain House is 80 miles west of here along a highway. The government has a great deal of land here that has either been cleared of timber or is overgrown with bush. There is lots of room for Hollanders with little capital who are not afraid of hard work. [Can't you just feel the aching back, the blisters, the sunburn, the mosquito bites?]

We are in contact with the government about this land and hope to have more information available soon.

Winnipeg

Electrification is coming quickly to the countryside. Land for garden farming near the city runs from \$200 to \$300 per acre with buildings; without, about \$50 per acre. Dairies about 12 miles outside the city with buildings cost from \$30 to \$40 per acre.

The CRC in Winnipeg was organized in 1908. There is no Christian school, but there are hopes that one will soon be built.



Edmonton First 1960

Chatham

There are five congregations in Ontario [76 by 1960]. We can easily place 200 immigrants on farms - more if you come in the spring. A married man can earn from \$900 to \$1200 per year with free housing. [Some newcomers were a bit shocked by their free housing.]

There is also lots of work in the factories and trades, for example, in construction, where one can earn from \$.75 to \$1.25 per hour.

Sarnia

Married farmers can find plenty of work on the farms. Unmarried, reliable farmhands can earn \$40 to \$50 per month with free housing.

Hamilton

Several Dutchman are already raising flowers in the area. Placing 40 to 50 men on farms within reach of the church should be no problem.

A city like Hamilton by its very nature offers excellent opportunities for tradesmen. Wages are especially high for bricklayers and carpenters. The CRC counts 32 families. The Christian school association is making plans to begin building.

Winston Churchill

A Churchill anecdote that appeared in a brief biography of the great man in one of our 1960 issues:

The famous playwright and radical, George Bernard Shaw once sent Churchill two tickets to a premier performance of one of his plays. The accompanying note said, "Here are

two tickets: one for you and one for a friend - if, indeed, you still have a friend."

Churchill sent the two tickets back with a note explaining that he was busy the night of the premier. He added, however, that he hoped to attend the second performance of the play - "if, indeed, there is a second performance."

A model exchange, wouldn't you say? We must build each other up but we must also keep each other humble. Neither man, I understand, was easy on friendships.

Edmonton First Jubilee

Edmonton First celebrated its golden jubilee on Thanksgiving Day in 1960. It was the mother church in Edmonton, instituted in October of 1910 with 18 confessing members and 23 baptized members. Its first meeting place was a tent along Jasper Avenue, where worship was conducted by the light of an oil lamp. This proved too cold in the winter, so the church rented a room above an auction hall.

The spring of 1911, however, saw the arrival of 60 immigrants from Holland, and a Colonization Society was formed for the purpose of locating 20,000 acres where the Dutch immigrants could establish a colony. This resulted in the settlement of what is now Neerlandia.

During the First World War, the church lost several members, but in the 1920s the church was reinforced by more arrivals from Holland.

When Rev. DeWaal-Malefyt accepted a call to the church in 1930, it boasted 20 families. By the



Anniversary

Why the post-war emigration?

Tom Polet

All of history is full of stories of individuals or even entire masses moving from one land to another, from the known to the unknown.

Reasons for such migration vary greatly. It may be out of zest for adventure, restlessness, economic necessity, or tragically because of persecution.

Abraham heard the voice of God, telling him to assemble his kin and his sizable herd, leave his fertile land and travel to the land God would show him. He went in blind faith. In a book on the History of Emigration to the USA I recently read that in the 17th century 35 percent of the residents of Holland had settled there during that era from other countries, mostly for religious or economic reasons.

I have often wondered whether many emigrants heard an inner voice of the Spirit to pack their suitcases, leaving the known behind and exchanging it for the unknown.

During my five years as Fieldman for immigration I have heard many different motivations expressed, and I recognized that with many migrants their indelible faith in God spurred them in their decision to emigrate and sustained them in the struggles of a new beginning.

Some motivations were ill conceived, and yet, after considerable hardship in the beginning of their settlement, brighter vistas often opened up and blessings followed.

I believe that the experiences of the occupation during the Second World War impacted the decision to emigrate far more than most people realized. The occupation limited movement and opportunities for adventure, but at the same time the search for daily bread brought out in many people untapped resourcefulness. A few

years after the war ended and freedom was restored, a restless spirit seemed to travel through the country. Sure, the store shelves were stocked again, the fields were producing and there was peaceful co-existence, life was no longer at risk and freedom tasted good, but there was a restless spirit. It was further fueled by two other elements: the fear of communist expansion and the unrelenting pressure of bureaucracy, which impacted every facet of life.

I take my Dad as an example.

Dad was a successful businessman, operating a farm supply and potato wholesale export business. The war changed his perspective drastically.

He had always had a very keen and engaging sense of community; that characteristic became the impetus of his engagement in the resistance movement. Already in the first year of the occupation, with some business friends, he organized the first resistance organization in the province of Friesland.

The German Occupation Forces emptied our warehouses, confiscated our trucks, and we were thrown back to the time of the late twenties, when Dad had started his business with horses and wagons. But he never despaired. His optimistic nature, his caring disposition and his positive faith commitment stood him well in those times.

What hurt him most was during the final year of the war when our entire family was forced to leave home and hearth and go into hiding. Dad was separated from his family much of the time, and the nine children were also scattered. During that time, while the business was managed by the foreman, there was not enough work for all our employees, but none were laid off and all of them

were fully paid.

When the war ended, Dad and I went through the accounting books, and we found there was less than 1000 guilders left in the bank account. On the first day Dad returned to the warehouse, staff and many clients lined up to welcome him back and cheer him. It was a deeply moving experience. It was also very encouraging and reason for thankfulness when, within a year after the war ended, our business had doubled in size.

In view of all this, the question arises, why did Dad, in 1948, propose to emigrate? Having worked with my Dad and always had a close bond with him, I reached these conclusions: Dad's decision was based on fear, disappointment and zest for adventure.

The fear was very real for him. Dad was a keen observer of post-war politics in Europe, and he saw a great deal of chaos and indecision by the governments. He did not want to subject his family once again to an even more cruel occupation by Communist forces. That fear became very clear to me once more, when in 1956 I was asked to spend five months in The Netherlands to be a consultant to prospective emigrants and make a speaking tour through the country. After my wife Joyce, our baby Mark and I sailed from New York, we were told on the second day at sea that Russia had invaded Hungary.

Two days after our arrival in Holland, I interviewed people at the office of the Christian Emigration Agency. At eight o'clock in the morning people were already lined up for two city blocks, and it struck me, during the interviews, that the majority feared further Russian invasions. To those who were not living in Europe at the time, it may

suppose, but I only remember the summer walks.

The golden jubilee of Edmonton First was celebrated in the Jubilee Auditorium with all five churches joining to sing "Happy birthday dear Mother." Rev. Peter Eldersveld of the *Back to God Hour* preached on the theme, The Temple of God. As God's dwelling place, the church will never perish. That's true not just of the spiritual church, but also of every local

Leaving for Canada



seem difficult to comprehend this fear, but let me assure you that the anxiety pervaded the country and the fear was very real.

Dad's disappointment stemmed from the continuing impact on life and business of the Dutch bureaucracy. Many oppressive rules, regulations and ordinances instituted by the German occupier were still in place and vigorously applied, even several years after the war ended. Many people, Dad included, hoped and expected that freedom from oppression would also bring a release and possible change from the overly regulated life that was legislated, not only during the war but also prior to the war by the legitimate Dutch government.

It did not happen. Moreover, during the war years, the resistance organizations were comprised of people of all religious and political allegiances, but they found a common cause that enabled them to work together. It was refreshing and stimulating. That also quickly changed when the war ended and old as well as new political boundaries appeared.

Dad's zest for adventure was part of his make-up and it was, undoubtedly, fed by his business acumen. In addition he felt that

the future for his nine offspring did not look very bright in war-torn Europe.

All these elements together motivated him enough to apply for emigration. We conferred as a family, and the decision was unanimous – although some of the children were reluctant. So in the spring of 1949 we embarked at Quebec City and traveled on to Manitoba, where we initially settled near Portage La Prairie. Most of the family still resides in or near Winnipeg.

Was it a good move? Who can say what life would have been like had we stayed. As happens many times during our lifespan, we make decisions, submit them to God's leading and accept its course. For all of us it has been a blessing, and now as I look over the extended family, amounting to well over one hundred, I can testify that the blessings continue.

I am sure that many immigrants, now well settled in this country, can identify with these sentiments.

Like Abraham, we, and thousands of others, went into the unknown, but God directed the way and he let us take care of the land.

church like Edmonton First. It will never be forgotten because many of its members are already in eternity.

Eldersveld reminded the people of Edmonton that God chose the foolish of this world so that no one could boast in the flesh. Anyone examining it closely will say, "What a mess!" But from afar it is part of a beautiful mosaic, built on Christ, her cornerstone.

But the world will not appreciate

her beauty, warned Eldersveld. Although the message we bring is good news, it is never popular. Do not think that just because your message is rejected that you have failed, for the Bible predicts that it will be received with contempt.

This celebration, said Eldersveld, is not to honor human beings but to recognize that although it is built with broken pieces, the church is nevertheless God's dwelling place.

Anniversary ...continued from page 6

time he left in 1938 the membership had grown to 60 families.

The first church, built in 1914, was eventually outgrown, and in 1947 a new church was built. With the flood of post-war immigration, however, the church was soon too small and the congregation was divided into two groups in 1951, and Edmonton Second was born.

Although the article doesn't say so, Edmonton Third must have been born very soon after,

for unless I'm mistaken, when we first settled in Beverly in 1952, before Maranatha began meeting in the Slovak Hall, we commuted downtown to Third Church. I have recollections, some good, some bad, of very long walks when the bus didn't show up on time – or perhaps a pastor preached too long. In summer walking along the river valley overlooking the North Saskatchewan far below could be quite pleasant. In winter less so, I

Church

Dresden's baroque church restored 60 years after being flattened

Frauke Brauns

Bielefeld, Germany (ENI)— A church in Dresden, Germany, called the finest baroque building north of the Alps that was almost destroyed in an air-raid on the city in the closing months of the Second World War in 1945 has been rededicated after 60 years.

"This church is a sign that we are able to live in reconciliation after guilt has been admitted," said Lutheran Bishop Jochen Bohl, at the rededication service on Reformation Day, October 30 of the Frauenkirche (the Church of our Lady) — attended by 1700 people, including German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and his expected successor Angela Merkel as well as top political and church leaders from abroad.

Earlier this year clergy from Coventry Cathedral in England presented the Frauenkirche with a cross made from medieval nails rescued from the roof of the English cathedral after it was destroyed by German bombing in 1940.

In the streets of Dresden, 60,000 people, some of them in tears, followed the service on giant television screens.

"The Church of Our Lady had been to Dresden's skyline what St Paul's is to London. It was held to be the finest baroque building north of the Alps," noted the Rev. Paul Oestreicher, canon emeritus of Coventry Cathedral and a founder of the Dresden Trust, a British group that helped raise money for

the rebuilding.

"That the golden orb and cross atop the Frauenkirche is a gift of the British people has made a great impact, especially as it was made by Alan Smith, the son of a pilot in the Dresden raid," Oestreicher wrote in London's *The Guardian* newspaper.

An estimated 25,000 to 35,000 people were killed in the air-raid of February 1945 that destroyed the Frauenkirche, which dates from 1734. The ruined building was left as a peace memorial by East Germany's communist government, which ruled that part of the country until 1990. The saturation bombing of Dresden by British and US planes was strongly condemned afterwards as excessive, although some military strategists argued it was necessary.

At the time of German unification in 1990 a group of Dresden residents issued an appeal for funds to rebuild the church, eventually assembling about 100 million euros (US\$120 million).

Money also came from the German government, the state of Saxony, the city of Dresden and the Protestant church. In all the cost of reconstruction, which began in 1994, amounted to 180 million euros.

The raid on Dresden

On the evening of Feb. 13, 1945, nine Mosquito fighter planes and 244 Lancaster bombers from the Royal Air Force's 5th fleet took off from their base in the south of England.

Dresden's air raid sirens started to wail at 9:39 p.m. Around 20

minutes later the first target-marking bombs fell on the stadium just outside of the city center. The first air raid lasted about 30 minutes and was so dense that the entire inner city was engulfed by a firestorm.

The Allies didn't just attack Dresden to break German morale; the idea was also to cut off communication lines to the front.

The second air attack took place between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. on Feb. 14. More than 500 planes bombed 15 square kilometers (9 square miles) of the city. All told, 650,000 firebombs, air mines and 1,800 demolition bombs were dropped on Dresden in the first two air raids. They totally destroyed the densely inhabited historic city center, mainly hitting residential buildings, churches, offices and museums.

During the bombing about 300 people, mostly women and children took refuge in the church. Although the building was badly damaged, it protected those inside. Two days later, however, the church collapsed.

Pointless destruction?

Though the bombing of Dresden has for years generally been viewed merely as pointless destruction, British historian Frederick Taylor claimed that the city was strategically important after all.

"There was a train junction, a garrison, troops came and went as in any other German city near the front," Taylor said. "The English planners wanted to prevent the

replenishment of supplies to the eastern front. The attack was not exclusively directed against Dresden; it was also against Chemnitz and Berlin."

Though there's no way knowing exactly how many people died, the official death toll is 35,000, and the city has become a symbol of World War II aerial warfare.

Raids saved Jews

Aside from the suffering and destruction they caused, the air raids saved the last 175 Dresden Jews. On the morning of February 13, orders were dispatched to deport them.

During the bombing though, many of the Jews were able to go underground, including the family of Heinz Joachim Aris, today head of Saxony state's Jewish community.

"I was born in Dresden and this city's ruin and the endless suffering of many innocent citizens was dreadful," Aris

said. "One must simply see it in the context of cause and effect."

For, Aris added, the Semper Synagogue was burned down on Nov. 9, 1938, and six years later the entire city followed. The Dresden inferno was part and parcel of a horrible war that included the destruction of cities like Rotterdam, Coventry and Leningrad.

Dresden's residents showed an immense willingness to rebuild their devastated home after the war. Their determination is exemplified by the reconstruction of the Frauenkirche. For nearly 50 years, the church's ruins evoked destruction and death.

But after German reunification in 1990, the Frauenkirche was rebuilt thanks to generous donations — also from the partnership with the city of Coventry. The new cross atop the church was donated by Britain's "Dresden Trust" and forged by the son of one of the bomber pilots.

Two black stone towers, the only part of the old Frauenkirche to remain intact, have been built into the new building as a sombre symbol of the city's suffering.

Inside the church, the charred and mangled cross that once topped the dome is now on display near the altar.



Church

Spirituality is both personal and communal, or nothing, theologian tells Covenant Network

Jerry L. Van Marter

MEMPHIS, TN — The Biblical concept of righteousness is both personal and corporate, and therefore the Christian faith journey is both inward and outward, a renowned theologian and ethicist told the Covenant Network of Presbyterians on Nov. 5 during the group's annual conference here.

"The prophets measure Israel's faithfulness to God by covenantal compliance," said Larry Rasmussen, a Lutheran former professor of social ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York. "Righteousness means that discipleship is deeply personal and communal piety, or it is nothing.... At the same time, its domain is the whole of earthly life — or it is not discipleship.... Walking the Way, then, is a journey inward tethered to a journey outward, and never the one without the other."

In all three Abrahamic religions — Christianity, Judaism and Islam — discipleship is "public" in three ways, according to Rasmussen: Discipleship is about "people of the Way" and about "a community pattern of life." Biblical writers variously refer to the Christian church as "a body," "a holy nation," "a chosen race" and "a peculiar people." The Greek word for church, "ekklesia," means a called meeting or an assembly, like a town meeting.

Discipleship is public, in that it is lived "across the whole of earthly life." Said Rasmussen: "This whole includes what is poorly named 'spirituality,' namely a world within to match the world aspired to."

Discipleship is publicly visible — "It is marked by rites and practices that are strong enough to form the next generation and assure that the faith has children and the children have faith."

Christian discipleship is invariably linked to a call to follow, Rasmussen continued, and that call, too, is both personal and public. "In the gospels, Jesus' call to his disciples is direct, personal and very public," he said, "a call to ordinary people in their workaday world, to fold up the nets, or close out the tax accounts and pack for a different future."

Spiritual practices or disciplines — particularly the sacraments — are the markers along the personal and communal journey of faith, supplying "a moral pattern and moral guidance system," Rasmussen said. "Indeed, apart from these practices, Christian moral discernment really has few markers at all, and little real substance."

"Without formative practices, what is called Christian judgment is little more than an opinion poll of those who happen to be on the membership rolls at the time. This is not discipleship."

So, for instance, Baptism as a public spiritual practice is tied to Paul's words in 2 Cor. 5: 17: "If anyone is united to Christ there is a new world; everything old has passed away: See, everything has become new" (NEB).

"Baptism is the focal practice that celebrates this new world in which the previous ethnic identities and the inherited social definitions are transcended and eliminated in Christ," Rasmussen said.

Discipleship often means improvising in response to changing circumstances.

Rasmussen, who was introduced as an "environmental theologian," said, "What is shocking is that we seldom connect the waters of life of Baptism to the waters of life on which absolutely all life utterly depends." To dramatize the connection, he said, he once proposed that new Baptisms be suspended until all the world's water is safe to drink — or else "we consciously baptize with toxic water."

To peals of laughter, Rasmussen conceded that "neither suggestion got takers." But he added: "A few did get the connection."

That example, Rasmussen said, points up the role spiritual practices play in forming beliefs. "Beliefs mean nothing apart from practices," he said, asking what good a "richly articulated theology of Baptism would be," for example, "if the community never gathered around the baptismal font."

Practices shape belief and give rise to theology, he said. "They are the doing that provokes reflection and gives rise to meanings that can reorder our ways."

African church leader says lack of water hinders poverty fight

Fredrick Nzwili

Machakos, Kenya (ENI) — The head of the All Africa Conference of Churches is urging churches to make the right of access to water a core part of their work, against a background of diminishing global supplies of fresh water for human consumption.

"Lack of water is as destructive as poverty, and indeed it is true that poverty cannot be rolled back if the scarcity of water is not resolved," said the Rev. Mvume Dandala, general secretary of the African church grouping, opening the inaugural meeting of the Ecumenical Water Network in Machakos, eastern Kenya on November 8.

The water network was formed by Christian groups to promote the preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution of water for all. About 70 experts on issues linked to water, as well as church leaders from Kenya, the Pacific, Latin America,

Asia, Europe and North America, were to take part in the five-day meeting.

Dandala said water had become a commodity, limiting the access to drinkable and usable water for many of the world's poorest people.

"If we view water not only as a substance we need for survival, but as an intrinsic part of who we are as living, breathing human beings, can we risk a set of circumstances where a community might lose access to water because they can't afford to pay the rates?" Dandala asked.

Recommendations from the conference will go to the World Council of Churches' assembly meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil in February 2006.

Members of the water network say they are concerned about issues such as consumer lifestyles that waste water directly or indirectly, the commercialisation of water resources, and its management as a commodity rather than as a social

good and a human right.

"We all have to take care of water. It is something that unites us," said Danuta Sacher, of the German aid agency, Bread for the World.

International aid agencies estimate 1.1 billion people do not have access to safe drinking water and this number is expected to rise to 3 billion by 2025.

A preparatory document for the Machakos meeting states that increased and unsustainable agricultural and industrial use of water, deforestation and land-degradation, over-consumption and waste, pollution and population growth has led to problems in water provision.

"But the crisis is aggravated by the prevailing economic system," the document notes. "Public and community control of water supplies has drastically diminished over recent decades and years. Increasingly water is treated as a commercial good subject to market conditions."

British Hindus call for withdrawal of baby Jesus postage stamp

Martin Revis

London (ENI) — Britain's Royal Mail postal service has apologized after the country's Hindu Forum called for the withdrawal of a Christmas postage stamp depicting what it described as a man and woman with Hindu markings worshipping the baby Jesus.

In a statement issued by the forum, an umbrella group for the British Hindu community, its secretary Ramesh Kallidai said it was "insensitive to use it at a time when the issue of conversions in India has been a subject of heated debate."



Kallidai said: "We therefore urge the post office to withdraw the stamp immediately or issue a redesigned version that does not have the Hindu markings on the foreheads of the two characters in the stamp."

A Royal Mail spokesperson told Ecumenical News International on November 2: "The painting dated between 1620 and 1630, on which it is based, is by a Hindu artist on the Madonna and Child theme. This theme has been chosen this year for a set of stamps portraying how it is interpreted by different communities in the world and we thought it a particularly beautiful

example. However the Royal Mail does apologize if any unintentional offence has been caused to the Hindu community."

He noted that it would not be possible to withdraw the stamp which had already been issued to 14,500 post offices in Britain.

The stamp which caused the offence was designed by Irene Von Treskow, an Anglican priest and illustrator living in Berlin who told Britain's Daily Telegraph newspaper she found it in a book and looked up the image on the Internet. She said it fascinated her because it showed a painting of a Christian subject from India's Mughal empire which predated the arrival of Britain as an imperial power in the Subcontinent.

Churches mediate in Nigerian oil dispute

Obed Minchakpu

Abuja (ENI) — The Ogoni community in southern Nigeria and the Shell oil company have started talks mediated by a Roman Catholic priest aimed at resolving a conflict about petroleum exploitation in the oil-rich Niger Delta region.

The local unit of the oil company ceased operations in Ogoniland in 1993 after widespread protests from the local Ogoni people demanding an increased share of oil profits and protesting at environmental damage in the area.

The president of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ledum Mitee, said he is optimistic about the possibility of reconciliation between the Ogoni and Shell, after Rev. Matthew Hassan Kukah was appointment as a mediator.

"The Ogoni have not foreclosed the prospect of resumption of oil exploration. All they are saying is that Shell is not the

only company that could do this," Mitee told Ecumenical News International on November 3. "And if oil exploration ever resumes in Ogoni," he said, "the people would resist any attempt by oil companies to carry on their activities with reckless disregard to the people's lives and environment."

MOSOP was founded by Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa who was executed with eight other Ogoni activists on November 10, 1995 by the military government then running Africa's most populous nation.

Following the executions, the Geneva-based WCC, with the support of Nigerian churches and MOSOP, sent a delegation to Nigeria. It issued a report stating that although Nigeria's oil reserves are located on the land of minority groups, including the Ogoni people, these groups had received little or no benefit from their use.

It urged Shell to enter into direct

negotiation with the Ogoni people so that a just, equitable, and peaceful settlement of the conflict could be found.

WCC general secretary, the Rev. Samuel Kobia, welcomed the Nigerian government's decision to implement the recommendation of the WCC report by appointing Catholic priest Kukah to facilitate the dialogue.

"We are encouraged by the appointment of Father Matthew Hassan Kukah, who we have known for several years, as a facilitator of the peace process," Kobia wrote in a letter to Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo on June 7. "Father Kukah has all the qualities of a patient and capable negotiator who is well aware of the situation of the Ogoni people and the issues facing them."

Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999, but although the Ogoni dispute has quietened down, violence has continued in the Niger Delta.

Journal

Gazeti Daktari: a doctor's newsletter

October 22, 2005

The rollercoaster ride of emotions has continued at work over these last weeks in Kapsowar. Men's ward has been particularly busy. Unfortunately, violent physical assault has been the cause for most of the excitement. In two days last week, three men were admitted with panga (machete) injuries.

Two young men arrived hours apart in the middle of the night with head injuries and facial lacerations caused by the mighty panga blade. One man was cut deep in the neck and the carotid artery was narrowly missed. In fact, it could be seen pulsating but unharmed at the base of the wound. Thankfully, both of these patients required only suturing and observation.

The third case was a little more complicated. It was later the very same day, as the sun was setting and rain started to fall that I started my walk home from outpatients and casually passed by the operating room on my way. I glanced over and saw a crowd of people outside the locked theatre doors.

In front of them lying on the grass was a 40 year-old man rolling around in obvious pain. One of his friends called out to me, "Daktari, come quickly, he has been stabbed!"

As I approached, I saw blood pooling around him and cautiously surveyed his injuries. He was conscious and breathing which gave some temporary reassurance. It soon became apparent that he was struck with a panga twice in the chest and once in his left flank.

Thankfully, the theatre staff soon arrived and we moved him into the operating room, where we got him on oxygen, started an i.v. and exposed his injuries further. I called my Kenyan colleague in for moral support and to help in the decision making. We had to decide whether to explore the wounds here or transfer him on difficult roads to the referral hospital in Eldoret.

The chest lacerations, although large, seemed not to penetrate deeper than his ribs and a chest x-ray suggested no pneumothorax. The flank laceration, however, ran deep and gentle probing suggested it might have run into the peritoneal cavity. We did a deep peritoneal lavage and it was positive for blood. This meant a more formal abdominal exploration was required.

It seemed a little out of my comfort zone to explore his abdomen without a general surgeon or an ICU to back us up, but then again I have been out of my comfort zone for months now. My Kenyan colleague seemed confident that we could scrub up and overcome this challenge together. I reluctantly agreed, as I knew that transfer on the dark, rain-drenched and mud-covered roads also brought significant risks for this man.

We proceeded with laparotomy hopeful that it would be an open and shut case. Unfortunately, we were sorely mistaken and we would spend the next 5 hours cleaning up his messy abdomen. We discovered fecal contamination of his peritoneal cavity



Rob in Kapsowar

and ended up repairing lacerations in both his sigmoid colon and descending colon, in addition to tying off several mesenteric bleeders. We carefully ran his bowel and explored the long and jagged tract made by the mighty panga.

God was obviously watching over this man as the cut had penetrated the retro peritoneum only narrowly missing his aorta and renal vessels. If the cut had strayed one inch in any direction he would have likely bled to death within minutes. By God's grace, working through our hands, he survived the surgery, has recovered well, and should be discharged in the coming days.

Children's ward, as usual, has had its ups and downs these last weeks. A three month-old girl was brought into the hospital last week with profound lethargy and fevers. She was of the Pokot tribe which lives in the valley, known for its high prevalence of malaria and other tropical disease. The family had made two trips to a local dispensary over the preceding week with their sick child and received the usual shot gun therapy of amoxicillin, flagyl, and fansidar.

Malaria is highly resistant to fansidar in

Africa, but often it knocks the parasitemia down just enough to mask the usual signs and symptoms. For the 24 hours prior to coming to our facility, this young girl became very ill and developed generalized seizures. On arrival, she had a 'glazed over' look in her eyes which has become all too familiar to me in pre-terminal kids on children's ward. She had a fever of 39C, was pale, lethargic and had an enlarged spleen.

While I was examining her she started to convulse. I rapidly placed an i.v. line in her scalp and stopped the seizures with valium. Labs were drawn by a femoral stab and confirmed our suspicion of falciparum malaria with high parasitemia. Her hemoglobin was profoundly low at 4.0 (normal > 12.0). Her diagnosis was severe, complicated cerebral malaria with hemolysis. We started her on quinine and Phenobarbital and transfused her twice over the next 24 hours.

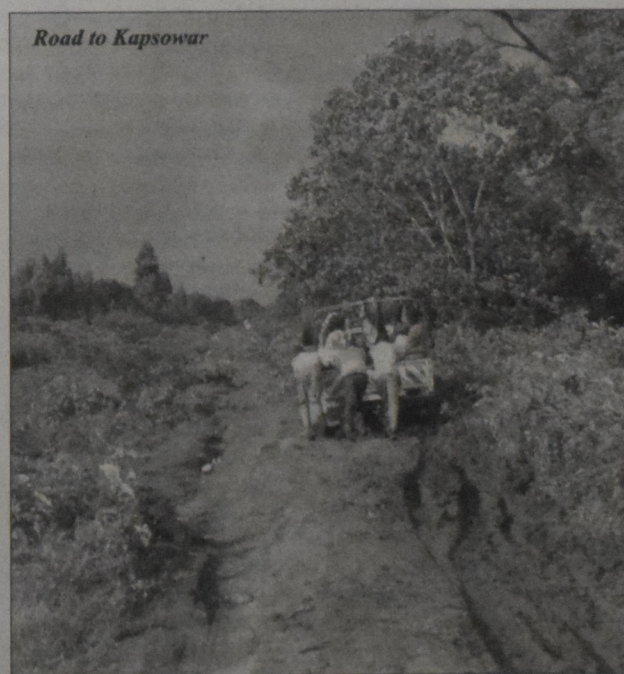
Our prayers were answered as she responded to our treatment and dramatically improved. The seizures did not recur, even after weaning off the phenobarb. She became alert and even flashed us heart-warming smiles on rounds. At discharge she was completely well with no obvious neurological deficits – a success story!

Some may remember one of my "gazeti" logs from August when I diagnosed a one-year old boy with HIV. He presented with persistent parotid and cervical lymph node swelling and failure to thrive over the preceding months. His mother and father reported good health and appeared to be a happily married young couple. This was their first and only child.

Only the father was present when the results came back to us in the outpatient department. Although I wanted to talk to them together, I was forced to disclose the positive HIV result to the father alone. He understood what the disease meant and



Kapsowar centre



Road to Kapsowar

Stewardship



Motherly love to son with meningitis

that it also likely meant both him and his wife harbored the deadly virus. I told him that he needed to discuss this with his wife, and I recommended that they return as a family to follow up in our recently initiated HIV comprehensive care clinic for counseling and confirmatory testing.

He assured me he would follow my advice, and we sent the child home with him on antibiotics to follow up for further investigations and treatment. Unfortunately, months went by and they did not show up as promised.

A few weeks ago, while on call, I was asked to come in to see a one-year old boy who presented with high fever and persistent inconsolable crying. Lo and behold, it was the same boy, but this time only his mother was with him.

Examination revealed a very sick looking boy with marked neck stiffness, altered consciousness, and high fever. A lumbar puncture revealed cloudy fluid that came out under high pressure. CSF analysis showed gram negative bacteria and was India ink positive (suggesting cryptococcal meningitis – a relatively common opportunistic infection causing meningitis in people with AIDS). Relieving the high pressure with the spinal tap almost immediately made him more comfortable and his crying stopped as he was consoled by his mother. I started him on Ceftriaxone and Fluconazole and we watched him closely in hospital.

I gently probed the mother about her understanding of what caused his illness and about why they did not come back sooner after their outpatient visit in August. It soon became evident that her husband had not disclosed the

results from two months ago and that she was unaware that her only son was HIV positive.

She looked in disbelief as I disclosed the reality of his illness which was certain to be hers as well. I tried to offer her hope by telling her of the highly effective anti-retroviral treatment recently introduced at Kapsowar hospital.

She remained silent, but her facial expression spoke loudly. In an instant she knew the lives of her whole family were threatened and her face spoke of this hopelessness.

However, this story does not end without hope. This young boy improved dramatically on treatment in hospital and was like a new child at the time of discharge. He soon was walking around the ward, eating vigorously, and behaving like a healthy toddler.

His father came to visit while he was hospitalized and both the chaplain and I had several opportunities to talk to them as a family. They willingly received counseling; for the benefit of their disease as well as for their marriage. We were able to enroll them in the anti-retroviral medicine program at Kapsowar Hospital, and they left with a glimmer of hope in their eyes.

More importantly, they stepped forward with renewed hope in the One who propitiates our sin, provides healing, and promises to make all things new.

By his grace,
Daktari Kiprop

Rob Greidanua is a doctor from Peace River, Alberta serving as a medical missionary in Kenya, Africa.

Serving the least of these – a steward's challenge

My memories of the last three kilometres of track as I entered the city of Dhaka, Bangladesh are still so vivid. They're the ones that stand out. I found myself wanting to look the other way, and to bury myself in the pages of the book I was reading in order to avoid the misery just outside my window – an avoidance of pain. The human thing to do to avoid pain is to look the other way, like changing the channel when poverty and hopelessness is naked before you.

The memory is vivid: it is poverty in slow motion, and its sights, sounds and smells are hard to ignore as hundreds of families live in makeshift shelters within six feet of the track. I tell myself, don't look too closely. Don't engage your eye. The sight will discourage you and may even break your heart. It's enough to melt even the most experienced aid worker.

The sight makes you feel guilty for your comfortable seat, but it also drives you to be even more convicted about helping the poor. Yet, these are not ones that are being helped by our work or by anyone else. The poor outside my train window are being passed by.

Jesus experienced poverty too. His eyes did not turn the other way. And today he challenges us to be engaged – to look poverty and injustice in the eye, and act.

Sometimes, it seemed to me, in the face of overwhelming need in Bangladesh, what we did was like adding a few drops of water to a large bucket of need. The work was so much bigger than ourselves, and the poverty so familiar that in time it made you indifferent to the poor. You began treating them like a problem to be solved, forgetting their humanity. Our own avoid-the-pain filters kick in. It's the same filter that makes us change the channel.

But that's no excuse: God cares, and he expects us to respond. In order for us to maximise our ability to respond we need to be faithful stewards committed to doing God's kingdom work.

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matt. 25:40

Matthew 25 is full of instruction for stewards. Matthew records three parables. In the first, Jesus teaches us to be ready (parable of the virgins), in the second, to be busy using all our God-given gifts for God and his Kingdom (parable of the talents), and in the third, to use them to serve him and our neighbors as if we were serving him directly (parable of sheep and goats).

It may surprise you to think that, even today, Jesus would attribute something you did for someone else (especially someone who in our thinking

doesn't count for much) as done directly for him. But that is basically what Jesus teaches. The opportunities to serve are close to home!

Can we become too cool, too complacent, about all the needs around us today? Is it possible that we who live in the affluent west protect ourselves by avoiding the hungry, the thirsty, the rejected? Can we feel the persecution, poverty, strife and the hopelessness that many feel today? As we are saturated with video and sound bites of disasters and poverty on our TV screens, do we become too accustomed or even become numb to it?

I know for myself, it's easy enough to be cool – and easy enough to excuse myself. Yet upon reflection, I need to recognize the sin of ignoring the needs around me.

Humanly speaking, it is not possible to respond to every need that comes our way. If we did try to do that we might quickly experience burnout. Many Christians working for World Missions, CRWRC or other Christian agencies do experience burnout. They feel overwhelmed by the need, and begin to feel hopeless about it. When we lose sight of God's perspective, we become discouraged, disillusioned and burned out.

However, by having a closer-to-Christ approach, I believe we can also avoid making the mistake of spending too many resources just taking care of ourselves, and thinking too highly of ourselves – as if we are the only means of responding to the great needs in our world. God is looking for us to work in step with him. Then Jesus can dispense the blessing: "Well done, faithful steward: I was in need and you met my needs!"

Stewardly Tip: Gift bags for street people. Jill our office manager has a friend who regularly works in the inner city and is asked for change by people living on the streets. Not wanting to support a bad habit but at the same time show compassion, this friend now keeps a stash of prepared small gift bags in her car trunk. Each bag contains toiletries, snacks, canned fish, fruit, socks, handy-wipes etc. that she purchases at thrift or dollar stores or receives as donations of samples from dentists. Now whenever she parks in the inner city and is asked for change, she reaches into her trunk for a gift bag. She is ready to be Christ for those in need!

Readers: Share your Stewardly Tips so that we all can make better use of the resources God has entrusted to us. Submit your suggestion and your contact information so that we can acknowledge your contribution or ask for more details.

Next issue: Charitable Gift Annuities

Rick is recovering at home after surgery. Rick DeGraaf works for Christian Stewardship Services in Markham, Ontario. Rick's email: rickd@cssservices.ca



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Opinion

Islam: friend or foe?

Harry Antonides

Radical Islam is the problem; moderate Islam is the solution.

(Daniel Pipes)

As the Imam [Ayatollah Khomeini] said, 'Israel must be wiped off the map.' The Islamic world will not let its historic enemy live in its heartland.

(Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of Iran)



Is Islam really a religion of peace, as many Muslims claim? Or is it a religion of war, as Islamic terrorists prove by their murderous deeds?

First of all, it needs to be recognized that there is more than one version of Islam. Here I want to concentrate on the conflict between the extremists and the moderates (or progressives), which is as old as Islam itself.

At different times and places, Muslims and non-Muslims have lived peacefully side by side. But more often than not, the radicals – who divide the world into one of warfare over against one of peace where Islamic law is the rule – have fought for and managed to obtain total power.

An enduring conflict

And so the internal conflict between radicals and moderates within the Islamic camp has been enduring. In the past that conflict, invariably fought with disastrous consequences for the losing side, has mostly occurred in the lands of Africa, the Far and Middle East.

But that has all changed, especially since the radicals have resorted to terrorist attacks against unsuspecting and defenceless citizens in many parts of the world. The conflict within the very heart of Islam has also directly impacted the West through large-scale Muslim immigration.

We can no longer turn a blind eye to the struggle within Islam, a fact that has been driven home to us in the events of 9/11 and the numerous other terrorist attacks that have killed thousands, with the very real threat of more to come.

As Salman Rushdie has discovered (after being forced into hiding in 1989 when sentenced to death by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for allegedly insulting Islam), the fatwa of a fanatic imam can reach into the heartland of western democracies. Cold-blooded attacks on the citizens of Istanbul, Madrid, London, Amsterdam and many other cities cannot be shrugged off so easily.

The response to these violent attacks on the West has been curious, to say the least. Prominent among the responses has been a refusal to face reality. One way to avoid facing reality has been to blame America for having aroused militant Islam. Another has been to refuse to recognize that the extremists do indeed find the motivation for their

violent crimes in their religion. Surely, many say, they cannot be serious. There must be some mistake, and they will see error of their ways if only we do a better job of explaining that we want to be their friends.

Yes, if only it were so simple that a little more patience and some more negotiations and conferences will make them see the error of their way. The hard truth is that Muslim extremists can find plenty of support in their history and especially in the Koran and their other scriptures to justify their hatred towards the West and towards all non-Muslims.

A call to arms

The radicals insist that it is the duty of every true believer to bring about the restoration of the original, pure application of the faith as prescribed in the Koran and by the Prophet Muhammad, who lived some fourteen hundred years ago (570-632). They consider fellow Muslims who insist that the Koran and Muhammad's teachings must be interpreted to take account of changing times and the freedom of others as worse than infidels. The latter are guilty of the worst possible evil, that is, apostasy – not merely a sin but a crime worthy of death.

What adds to the confusion about the real Islam is that the Koran itself can be quoted in support of a moderate as well as an extremist position. The Koranic verses often quoted by the moderates, as well as by extremists who want us to believe that Islam is a religion of peace, state that there shall be no compulsion in religion (sura 2.256), and that killing one person is like killing all mankind. (sura 5.32)

But these peaceful sections are greatly outnumbered by the warlike injunctions, such as the following.

Fight against such of those to whom the Scriptures were given as believe neither in God nor the Last Day, who do not forbid what

God and His apostle have forbidden, and do not embrace the true Faith, until they pay tribute out of hand and are utterly subdued. (sura 9.29)

When the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful. (sura 9.5)

Muhammad is God's apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers [all non-Muslims] but merciful to one another. (sura 48.29)

Secular Westerners have a hard time comprehending the veneration Muslims accord to their holy book, which they accept as the final, eternally existing word of God passed on to Muhammad. It does not merely contain instructions for prayer and other forms of worship, but it is revered as the divinely given law for every facet of life. As the Islamic scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr of George Washington University explains, "... all that is Islamic, whether it be its laws, its thought, its spiritual and ethical teachings and even its artistic manifestations, have their roots in the explicit or implicit teachings of the Sacred Text." (*Islam Unveiled*, Spencer, 17)

The extremists interpret the all-inclusive character of the Koran as a call to strive for the establishment of a theocracy, which would include the worldwide political rule by religious leaders, that is, the caliphate.

There is a sort of (perverse) logic to move from this starting point to the conclusion that all man-made laws are an abomination and therefore not valid for the true believers. This deeply religious conviction is at the heart of the conflict between radical Islam and the

Western ideas of democracy and freedom.

While moderate Muslims are content to live in peace with non-believers, their radical counterparts are convinced that it is their duty to work for the establishment of Islamic (sharia) law wherever they live. This message, proclaimed by radical imams in Europe and North America has inspired many to consider the country in which they live, and of which they may even be citizens, as enemy territory.

We should not be surprised that enclaves of immigrant Muslims clustered around the mosques in Western cities are breeding grounds for hatred. It is the kind of hatred that has led some to turn against their own country by joining the ranks of the jihadists who murder in the name of Allah.

Here are a few chilling excerpts from the man who led the 1979 revolution in Iran, and who is a hero to the extremists, the late Ayatollah Khomeini.

Islam makes it incumbent on all adult males, provided they are not disabled or incapacitated, to prepare themselves for the conquest of [other] countries so that the writ of Islam is obeyed in every country in the world.... But those who study Islamic Holy War will understand why Islam wants to conquer the whole world.... People cannot be made obedient except with the sword! The sword is the key to Paradise, which can be opened only for the Holy Warriors! There are hundreds of other [Qu'ranic] psalms and Hadiths [sayings of the Prophet] urging Muslims to value war and to fight. (Quoted in Spencer, 35)

The following also leaves no doubt about the worldwide ambitions of radical Islam:

It is our duty to globalize the world around Islam and call the world to join Islam: 'You may warn the Mother of Cities and those around her.' This means the entire world. This religion was sent to the entire world, globalization, in principle. (October 25, 2004, Saleh al-Munajid. Saudi cleric)

This is not to suggest that all Muslims are terrorists. In fact, it is safe to assume that most are not; and the extremists do not control all mosques. Nonetheless, the Muslims who are against terrorism are mostly silent out of fear or indifference. This gives the impression that radical Islamism has the upper hand. But there has been a change in that more moderates are beginning to protest against the violence perpetrated in the name of their religion.

Silent no more

Even in Arab/Muslim countries, some have dared to protest. Here is a mother in Saudi Arabia who complained that her teacher was a terrorist who tried to influence his students. What is remarkable is that her protest was published in the Arabic online daily, *Al-sharq al-Awsat* (October 2, 2005). She summarized: "How are we to confront this Irhabi [terrorist]?"

See Islam on page 14...

Mission

Holistic thinking for maritime ministry

Jason Zuidema

The following is a speech given at the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA) Conference October 26-29. It addresses a very specific ministry, but the principles sketched out apply to most areas of ministry, so we share it with you here. Thanks also to Rev. Lloyd Burghart, who helped organize the conference and who sent us the speech.

Rev. Jason Zuidema is a minister in the Reformed Church of Quebec and lecturer in Church History at Institut Farel, Montreal, Quebec. NAMMA is a Christian voluntary non-profit network association of individuals and approximately 180 agencies, most of them church-related, serving seafarers in the sea ports of North America.

Our theme is *Many Expressions, One Task*. Although this banner rings joyful, all of us who have been involved with ecumenical seafarers' missions know that it is often more wishful than actual. Nonetheless it is a helpful motto in that it has brought us all here together away from our respective posts to consider more deeply the mission in which we are collectively involved. From my experience in Seafarer's ministry and my visits to other seafarer's centres around the World, I am fairly convinced that this mission is on a practical level one of the most ecumenical and catholic organizations in the world.

If the seafarers actually realized the number of different denominational organizations with which they interacted on a regular basis I imagine they would be very puzzled. It is a mystery how the differences between the representative denominations are often so little in the eyes of the seafarers, yet so great on an official level among us 'land lubbers.' Indeed, underneath our motto *Many Expressions, One Task* is not only wishful thinking, but deep theological and methodological differences.

We are confronted then with the oneness of the task before us. Certainly we would admit the "many expressions" of Seafarer ministry. In any individual mission there are those who concentrate on driving, or cleaning, or manning the cash register; others who focus on administration, seafarers rights, making ready the centre for the daily activities; or, as represented here, those who are called as chaplains, evangelists, or deacons. All these people show on a very practical level the "many expressions" of ministry.

But it is among this last group where the "many expressions" of ministry become problematic for the "one task" of Seafarers ministry. It is problematic, as is indeed the theme of this conference, because we are often not agreed as to what the "one task" of Seafarers ministry is.

It is good to have this motto before us, but we know that such is not often the reality of ecumenical ministry.

The lot has fallen to me, then, to encourage or to put a little *oneness* back in the task of Ecumenical Seafarers ministry. Perhaps my little contribution this morning as a Reformed minister, not one of the 'big-four' in NAMMA, might stimulate your thinking on this constant practical reality. I certainly do not have the solution to our corporate problem, but I have found that this reflection has at least

been helpful for my personal experience in maritime missions.

The issues and the whole

I often see in Ecumenical endeavours in Seafarers ministry what has been called by the contemporary Italian Reformed theologian, Leonardo deChirico, "Issues thinking." Issues thinking, he writes, is the attempt to address ecumenical problems on the level of individual issues.

For example, often Evangelicals and Catholics have tried to continue party lines or rebuild ecumenical relations on the basis of an understanding of justification, or mariology, or sacramental theology, or a whole host of individual issues. Unfortunately, writes deChirico, the dialogue between these groups (and especially the Protestant understanding of the Catholics) suffers because there is much more in play than any single issue. He argues that Protestants would do much better to discuss the larger issues of the relation of nature and grace and the Catholic understanding of the Sacramental nature of the Church. Indeed, the point of his work is to encourage *holistic* or *foundational* thinking rather than continue issues thinking.

The interesting point of deChirico's book is this – that although it is historically individual issues that separate us, it might not be those issues that continue to keep us apart. To put it in other words, if there is a willingness to have ecumenical relations with another denomination, much more needs to be looked at than simply the proverbial 'straw that broke the camel's back.'

So also in Seafarer's missions. We can all certainly point to the issue or issues that are keeping us apart, but it might be necessary to look elsewhere if we want to work together again. Using these ideas of deChirico as a springboard, then, I would like also to encourage holistic thinking and method in Seafarers ministry. Although I will certainly speak theologically, my aim is to rectify what I consider to be methodological issues thinking. It is often on the level of method



Seafarer's Chaplain, the Rev. David Wells, pays a pastoral visit onboard ship.

and practice that the ecumenical rubber hits or, unfortunately, skids off the road.

In seamen's missions worldwide there is an important dichotomy between those who see the 'one task' of ministry as diaconal work and those who see it as verbal evangelism. From the beginning I must say that these two are certainly not antithetical and many try to do both, but nonetheless this is an important divide.

This divide was impressed upon me again most recently while visiting three different clubs of the German Seafarer's Mission in North-Western Germany. As you might know, the motto of the German Seafarer's Mission is "support of seafarers' dignity" – a motto which is perhaps shared by their cousins here in North America.

The motto is applied differently in the various clubs throughout Germany. Some understand the support as strictly diaconal support – indeed, the main animators of certain clubs are deacons themselves. In other clubs the main animators are ordained ministers of the Lutheran Church. Most of these ministers, alas, act as deacons and often as administrators. Still, it is wonderful to see that these clubs and the corresponding Seafarer's homes are some of the best in the world for diaconal services offered.

Yet, there are also differences on the level of understanding the "dignity" in the motto "support of seafarers' dignity." Generally, supporting dignity is understood in terms of seeking to provide what a seafarer needs. But who defines what a seafarer *needs*?

In most German clubs there is a focus on more social concerns. They certainly agree there are religious needs, but there is a great deal of divergence in how they actually provide for these religious needs. Although they all represent one denomination, often they provide in different ways.

Compare, for example, the respective chapels in the three Seaman's clubs I visited. In the first club there is a fairly small, but obviously Christian chapel with a large German Bible open on the communion table. The pastor here tries to conduct Christian services on occasion, but mostly he drives

the van and administers the club. He has set an honest goal of visiting twice the number of ships next year, but with his present administrative responsibilities it will be a hard goal to reach.

At the second club, the chapel is very different. A much larger room has a dozen or so prayer stations, at which the individual seafarers can practice their religion. Going around the room, starting with the Muslim prayer space facing Mecca, are stations for Jews, Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Hindus, Buddhists. There is even a space for the odd Lutheran or Protestant (none specifically for the Christian Reformed Church, unfortunately). For all there is a prayer request book (to the Christian God, I presume) at the door. I am not sure how much the chapel is used, but it is presented as another diaconal service provided by the club. Undoubtedly, those who run the club are passionate about their ministry among the seafarers, but certainly the focus is on diaconal and recreational concerns.

The last club, which recently built their building, took a third route. Wanting neither something too overtly Lutheran nor too overtly pluralist, they took the interesting route of building a basically empty room as a quiet room in which the individual seafarer has the opportunity to decide whatever religious practice he chooses. There is a faint outline of a cross on the back wall, but the room is non-descript enough that any religious practice could be accommodated.

Despite these differences, it is fairly clear that a German Seamen's Mission worker would weight the "one task" largely on the side of diaconal or social work.

This definition by our German counterparts, I imagine, is in contrast to an equal number of chaplains who would push more for verbal evangelism as the "one task" of ministry. Many mission groups focus on distributing Christian literature on board ships. Although I can't criticize the contents of much of what is distributed, seeing as a great deal is Bible selections, I don't know how effective this literature is and how much is even read. There is certainly a place for literature ministry in Seaman's ministry (indeed, I have participated in the distribution of this literature), but it can't be the whole of the ministry, or it might be viewed as fairly irrelevant to the life of the seafarer. Without being part of a more comprehensive strategy on our part to address the needs of the whole person, much of this literature will be looked on as unappealing and on a practical level as useless (simply because it won't be read).

The purpose of my speech this morning
See Maritime Ministry on page 15...

Ecclesiastes

Seize the day!

A.A. van Ruler

Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him — for this is his lot.

Ecclesiastes 5:18

In the midst of all his troubled reflections on the futility of human life and especially of the vanity of wealth, the Preacher does discover at least one thing that he can declare to be good without reservations of any kind: at least we can enjoy what is here in the present and what we possess here and now.

It is also possible that he means that we should not pursue a multiplicity of goods but be satisfied with the few things we already have. Let's enjoy these.

But this is not the only way to understand his words.

The central stress is not on the matter of much or little but on whether we are letting the days slip through our finger or whether we are seizing each and every day to enjoy it. This is the way to live, he suggests. We should live in the present and limit ourselves to the present and enjoy it as much as we

are able. Every single day, every single moment in time is a ripe peach to be picked, peeled and enjoyed. "Seize the day!" is the advice he gives us.

There is a lot of disagreement, of course, about the nature of enjoyment. Many are quick to point out that there is quite a difference between different kinds of enjoyment. Some forms of enjoyment are much higher than others. There is the physical enjoyment of eating and drinking. There is the bodily and emotional enjoyment of sex. There is the enjoyment of the arts, of ideas and of wisdom. There is the enjoyment of being and working together and of virtue and doing good, which have their own reward. And there is also, according to believers and mystics, the highest kind of enjoyment of all, the most authentic, the only true form of enjoyment — the enjoyment of eternity, of salvation, of God.

The Preacher likely would not have denied that our enjoyment does indeed take many forms. But whether he would rank them in terms of higher and lower, I don't know. At any rate, he begins with the simplest — eating and drinking. In fact, this is actually the only one he mentions by name. For the rest



Luis Melendez Still Life

he speaks in general terms about our enjoyment of "goods".

It is not that he doesn't know about the joys of sex or of wisdom, virtue and godliness. But he seems to suggest: let's not puff ourselves up too much and let's not take ourselves too seriously. Let's not turn it into a stairway with a large number of steps by which we must ascend to ever higher levels. Eating and drinking is something we must do all our lives, and we ought also to be able to enjoy it.

All of them were created by God.

They are a gift from God and we must not demean them. At the last judgment one of the most important questions that God will pose is, "What did you do with my world? Did you fully appreciate it?"

The Preacher considers this idea of the enjoyment of the present in relation to two different things: first in relation to the brevity of life, and secondly in relation to the meaninglessness of life.

We ought to enjoy the good things of life in the few days that God gives us. Life passes very quickly. Before we realize it, the end is near. Just as sand slips through the fingers of a child playing in the sand, so our lives slip through our fingers. Suddenly we are old, and we're saying, Where has the time gone?

That makes us unhappy. And that's not good, for God has not put us here to be unhappy. We can be happy only when we ignore the swiftly passage of time and the fleetingness of life and instead become absorbed in the present. Then we no longer dwell on the brevity of our lives, because "God keeps [us] occupied with gladness of heart" (vs 19). When we are enjoying things, we are inwardly happy. All happiness involves a certain timelessness, a sort of undisturbed everlastingness.

Of course, the Bible does have others things to say as well. For example in Psalm 90 it says, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." We must not block death out of our experience of life but include it — but this must be done in the right way.

Death puts a period at the end of our lifespan, but in so doing it also puts an accent on it. Death and

eternity cast us back into the present. Reality is the here and now, for it is created reality, which remains important to God for all eternity. This is why we should be focused on it and enjoy it with all our senses.

But the brevity of life brings us before something else, something very strange. Although life is surprisingly short, we cannot grasp it as a unified whole. Just try it, says the Preacher. What does it add up to? Does it produce anything permanent? Does it have any substance or meaning?

No matter how hard a person labors, in all sorts of ways it culminates in the desert of futility. All his labor under the sun is a chasing after wind. This is the big theme that the Preacher keeps returning to — of life's vanity or futility.

And in this connection he gives the advice: *carpe diem!* Seize the day. There is not nothing. There is something — reality. We ourselves are here too. Just let that fact sink in all the way. It's enough to make your head spin. Isn't it an amazing thing that we are here — even if only for a short time? Nevertheless, we are! The great ocean of eternity will not wash away the fact that we have been here for a time in time.

And isn't that an incredibly good thing? Isn't *being* good? Isn't it much better than not-being? The goodness of being and the goodness of all those other goods, including eating and drinking — all this we may and must enjoy.

But this does not come as the result of all our labors. As the product of our own work and as our own project, life again and again issues in failure and disaster.

But life is more than a human work or project. It is also being. It is also a gift. As such beneath and over and through all of life's futility and meaninglessness, there is something deeper, something more fundamental — the good. By definition, there is only one thing we can do with it. We cannot pursue it. We cannot achieve it. We can only enjoy it. The heart of all things simply falls into our laps.

Usually we live our lives unaware. That's what sin is. And sinners are miserable. But the Preacher call us back out of our alienation from what is real. He says, Stay in the present! Remember that you are here! Enjoy being! What more can we want than to enjoy the good, for this is our lot (vs 18), this is why we were created.

Islam...continued from page 12

ist] mentality, when we notice that all our efforts to spread a spirit of tolerance and an acceptance of the 'Akhar' [the Other] is being thwarted in the classrooms?"

There is a growing number of Muslim moderates who are speaking out publicly, as did this Saudi mother. The Middle East Media Research Institute (available online) is an important source of such translated material from Arabic publications.

In Canada, we should recognize those Muslims who have denounced the Islamic terrorists, including the well-known Irshad Manji. There are many more, including Tarek Fatah who recently sparred with Canadian Islamic Congress president Mohamed Elmasry, who is quick with his accusation of Islamophobia but reluctant to condemn all terrorists outright. Other moderate Canadian Muslims, notably women such as the indomitable Homa Arjomand, recently spearheaded the campaign against the adoption of sharia law in Ontario.



Tarek Fatah



Homa Arjomand



Irshad Manji

Salim Mansur, professor at the University of Western Ontario, has not been shy speaking the truth about Islamic terrorists. In his *Toronto Sun* (October 15, 2005) article, "Extremists' violent perversion of religion threatens us all," he wrote that Osama bin Laden is the face of a "murderous ideology." He continued:

The worldview of these murderers — irrespective of how they strive to link their acts to Islam — is starkly primitive. Their world consists of nominal Muslims, to be ruled by them as Taliban chief Mullah Omar ruled Afghanistan, and infidels against whom they must wage an endless war.

Mansur is particularly critical of the many who are blind to the reality of radical Islam, while blaming the West for having created the "root cause" of terrorism. Quoting Lenin's famous phrase about "useful idiots," Mansur castigates "the vast majority of Muslims — in particular those in North America and Europe — whose silence in the face of evil feeds the bloodlust of Muslim terrorists."

We could do far worse than listen to the voices of these courageous and fair-minded Muslims who refuse to be silent bystanders in the face of evil. The rest of us should do no less.

Harry Antonides
hantonides@sympatico.ca

Mission/Images

Maritime ministry...continued from p. 13

is to argue that these two avenues are not mutually exclusive. In fact, I am sure many of you see my two examples as straw men, which I will now proceed to knock down. Indeed, many here will say that neither of the extremes represents them. I personally hope this is the case. Yet, even though these two extremes don't represent our ministries exactly, our ecumenical problems arise because we are each at different points along the spectrum.

Rather than look at the merits or demerits of each chaplain or seaman's club in the world, I wish to go to the much broader question of general human needs. Each of us has an understanding, whether stated or non-stated, of anthropology, that is, of the human person. All of us, denominationally or individually, have assumptions about the basic needs of human beings in this world. One of the big problems in Seafarer's ministry, indeed, in all ecumenical missions, is that different chaplains have very different understandings of what a seafarer needs as a human being.

In what follows, I would like to promote what I see as a biblical and Reformed understanding of anthropology – one which I hope can be helpful for our discussions this morning.

I am the pastor of a French Reformed Church and I subscribe to an understanding of biblical revelation as reflected globally in the Reformed confessions. Although these confessions were written several centuries ago in the midst of heated polemic and in cultures much different than our own, yet there are several distinct thoughts in these confessions which I believe could be shared by and be useful for all of us here this morning. Specifically, what interests me here is the holistic approach to the human being.

One of the most widely known confession of the Reformation era among Reformed Churches is the Heidelberg Catechism (1563). For those of you who might not have heard of it, a couple of facts are in order. The document is surprisingly ecumenical for its time. Although certain points of Catholic doctrine are rejected (remember that the Council of Trent had just issued its anathemas against the Protestants), the document nonetheless tried to regroup the Protestants under a single positive banner.

Indeed, the document sought to

build on what was viewed as the positive tradition of the middle ages. The opening section on sin, for example, can be seen as directly linked to the substitutionary atonement theory of the medieval theologian Anselm.

Reformed Churches have always understood the authority of the confessions not to be their own, but that of Scripture. But whatever the strengths or weaknesses of the document as a whole, it is only the first question and answer that I want to focus on this morning.

Q. & A. 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism:

Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

A. That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

At least three ideas are important in this small answer. First, the Lordship of Christ over soul and body. Second, the providence of God in the smallest things of life. And third, the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

This answer points to the importance of the Lordship of Christ over soul and body. The Christian religion is not just concerned about saving souls or helping people out economically, but is concerned with the whole person – body and soul. As chaplains, servants of this Lord, we do not have the option to concentrate on souls or on bodies, but should be concerned with both. It is people we are dealing with, not disembodied souls or needy corpses.

As such, our work should never forget the whole person and the needs of the whole person. Often we neglect the more comprehensive needs of the individual men. Consider this list of needs: physical, financial, recreational, emotional, spiritual. Overall, we are well-equipped to supply for the physical needs of the men.

Bumper stickers

Recently I saw a vehicle that was being driven by a young man with a bumper sticker that read BEER IS NOT JUST FOR BREAKFAST ANYMORE. When he parked, I asked him why he put that sticker on his car. Though undoubtedly surprised by the question, he respectfully answered that he thought it was funny. Our conversation ended there, so I didn't get a chance to ask him what he thought that specific bumper sticker says about him. I left curious about the relative merits of bumper stickers and paid some more attention to these small billboards.

MY CHILD DRINKS
OUT OF THE TOILET

Hagane Society of Pagosa Springs • (970) 264-1144



It is curious to see what people put on their cars for the rest of the world to read. Most bumper stickers are palatable (I'VE CLIMBED GROUSE MOUNTAIN). Some are boastful (MY CHILD IS AN HONOR STUDENT), while others are targeted at other bumper stickers (MY CHILD CAN BEAT UP YOUR HONOR STUDENT). Some are funny (I HATE BUMPERSTICKERS) and some are very funny (MY OTHER CAR IS A TRACTOR) or (FARMERS ARE USUALLY OUT STANDING IN THEIR FIELD). Some are confusing (PUPPIES AREN'T JUST FOR CHRISTMAS) and some are thought provoking (JESUS IS COMING, LOOK BUSY). Some bumper stickers ring true at the very time they are being read (IF YOU CAN READ THIS THANK A TEACHER).

While I was still living under my parent's roof and borrowing their car, I can remember when my mother's car was christened with a Jesus or Ichthys Fish, proclaiming to all who followed us that believers were behind the wheel. When I drove the car, I was not embarrassed about declaring that we were believers, but I felt that I could not speed or weave in and out of traffic without a guilty conscience.

In early Christian times, the fish symbol was simple to draw and was often used among Christians as a type of password during times of persecution by the Roman government. If two strangers met and were unsure whether each other were a Christian,

Everything is done to assist the International Transportworkers Federation (ITF) in assuring that there is physical well-being onboard the ships and that nothing is lacking in provisions or safety equipment. Financially, we also help the ITF in whatever way possible and are one of the major facilitators of sending money back home. On the level of recreation we are doing very well. Most of the clubs I have seen are well-stocked with all sorts of recreational options for a well-deserved night out from the ship.

On these first three most seafarers clubs have similar visions. It is on the last two where there is a great deal of difference. We are often not great at meeting the

emotional or spiritual needs of the seafarers. Sometimes this is a language problem (and if you do not know several languages, I would greatly encourage you to start learning), but even in our own language we are often generally at a loss as to what to do.

My point of view here might be controversial, but it is backed by my reading of the biblical witness and by the idea summarized above of the Lordship of Christ over soul and body. People have emotional and spiritual needs. These need to be met like the physical, financial and recreational needs, or there will be negative consequences. Without regular positive emotional and spiritual support a person will develop problems much greater

My window seat

Mendelt Hoekstra



one would draw an arc in the earth like). If the other were a Christian, they would complete the symbol with a reverse arc (), forming the outline of a fish.

It has been said that you can find out much about a person by looking at his or her garbage. We can find out what products people buy, how much people buy, how much they recycle and other things about their daily lives. This is also true with bumper stickers. While garbage is meant to be private and not for others to peruse, bumper stickers are purchased and stuck as a pronouncement of who we are or would like others to see us as.

As Christians our lives should be a 24-hour bumper sticker for others to see, hear and feel. In I Kings 2: 2b-3, Scripture tells us that the time drew near for King David to die and that he gave charge to his son Solomon. King David tells Solomon to be "strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in his ways and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go."

Had there been bumper stickers in Solomon's time (possibly MY OTHER CHARIOT IS A MULE), it would be interesting to see what Solomon would have chosen. In today's hard and cold world, the church needs loud Christ-like bumper stickers.

Mendelt D. Hoekstra is the founder and director of the Music Therapy program at Bethesda, an organization owned and operated by the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario, that supports adults with developmental possibilities. He lives in Vineland, ON with Marisa and their two children.

[Mr. Hoekstra perhaps forgets that Solomon produced a whole book of "bumper stickers" – called the Book of Proverbs. But Solomon may not have written all of them. On a second thought, most wouldn't fit easily on a bumper unless you have a Hummer. Here's a good one for a bumper sticker: DO NOT SWERVE TO THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT; KEEP YOUR FOOT FROM EVIL. (Prov. 4:27) Sorry, Mendelt, but I couldn't resist. Ed.]

than any brought on by negative physical, financial, or recreational circumstances.

Hence, as Chaplains, we need to consider the emotional and spiritual needs of the seafarers who enter our harbors and address them as best as we can. I am convinced by the biblical witness that the seafarers, like everyone else on this earth, have that negative void in their life without faith in Christ as Lord. So as part of a holistic ministry I will attempt to address that void and put the seafarer into contact with the message of Christ and the importance of God for his life.

(The remainder of Zuidema's speech will appear in the next issue of CC.)

Reflections

Do you hear what I hear?

Christopher Devinck

When I was in graduate school at Columbia University, the student who occupied the room next to mine owned one record album: horn concertos by George Philip Telemann. I do not remember his name. He had a bristly mustache, wire-framed glasses, a thin

face, and we never spoke, except to say hello when we passed each other in the hallway of the graduate dorm. But each night, at around 9:30, these regal trumpets emanated through the thick wall that separated my room from the Telemann enthusiast.

I didn't mind. I'd lie on my bed and listen to the distant music. Sometimes I'd fall asleep and wake up in the middle of the night to the roar of city traffic, or to the garbage truck swallowing trash from the green dumpster that sat in the alley below my second story window.

I cannot sleep with a ticking clock. I cannot sleep with a window air conditioner. For the first three years of our marriage, my wife chuckled as I stopped the old school clock we bought at an antique shop just before we went to bed, and restarted the pendulum's swing in the morning just so I would not hear the ticking, ticking, ticking even though the clock was downstairs in the living room. Finally I just stopped the clock entirely and it hasn't run in twenty-five years.

When our children were little, I liked checking on them before going to bed. I liked to rest my arms on the baby's crib and listen to her breathe and breathe. I liked hearing the voice of my son whispering in the darkness, "Good night, Daddy."

For all of my life I have lived close enough to the train tracks, and I could hear the trains clatter, and the whistles blow.

I like the sound of the leaves brushing against themselves during an oncoming storm. I like Bing Crosby's voice, the music of Bach, the squawk of the blue jays, the laugh of my daughter.

For ten years, I wrote in the basement of this little house, and each time the furnace kicked in, I flinched.

What is sound? How do we hear? Of course we can know the mechanics of it all: the outer and inner ear, the vibrations, the ear drum and all, but there is more to sound than just anatomy.

A porpoise can send out clicks through the water. Birds, lions, wolves send out songs and roars, but a woman can whisper, "I love you." A monk can sing a Gregorian chant. We take for granted the pleasure of hearing.

Helen Keller wrote in a letter to a friend, after a lifetime in silence and darkness, "to be deaf is a greater affliction than to be blind. Hearing is the soul of knowledge and information of a high order. To be cut off from hearing is to be isolated indeed."

What do we do if we are slowly becoming deaf? My father, who is 93, speaks with confidence about his life, reads, weaves, writes, walks in the garden, roots for the Belgian tennis players on the television matches, and he is nearly incapable of hearing anything anymore. He often feels isolated, sits in his chair during holiday celebrations and smiles, maintains his dignity and often speaks about his life as a young adult sailing, riding horses, meeting my mother, coming to America, finding work.

Whenever I'd call home in the past and my father would answer the phone, I'd ask him how he was, and he answered, always, "Everything is under control."

My father does not answer the phone any longer. He cannot hear it ringing, and he cannot hear my voice on the phone.

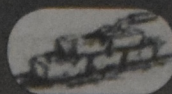
In the middle of the night, when I cannot sleep, I often think of my father lying in his bed in the silence of his room. I wish I could tell him that if he listens carefully, he can hear the coronets of Telemann penetrating the thick walls of the room. I wish I could remind my father how the morning lark sings.

I wish I could tell my father that my hearing is slowly deteriorating. I wish I could tell my father I am afraid to die.



BuildingTrust

Vicky Van Andel Ed.



The woman who rose up

A few weeks ago Rosa Parks was buried. Rosa was a black woman who refused to stand up for a white person on the bus while riding to her job making dishcloths in a sewing factory.

I hadn't heard of Rosa until I inadvertently tuned into CNN and witnessed part of her memorial service. The service lasted seven hours and was attended by a lot of dignitaries. Many prominent people spoke very eloquently to her honor, each person elaborating in a different way on the enormous difference Rosa had made in the lives of so many people. Rosa Parks took racial discrimination all the way to the Supreme Court. She won her case and her courageous act led to the abolition of racial discrimination in the United States.

A number of things strike me about Rosa, her life and death. What kind of a woman was she and what was it about her that enabled her to make so great a difference? The people at her funeral service said many good things about her.

As I listened I managed to scribble down a few of the well-meant sincere accolades: "Rosa had an impeccable character. She had quiet stature and a calm and serene demeanor. Her power rested in her soft-spoken presence. She had no ego. Rosa spoke in whispers; she never raised her voice. She had a Mother Teresa like aura that brought peace. She was never negative. She never lied to herself. She was courageous. She was a Christian. She would turn her cheek once or twice but not a third time. When she had suffered enough she decided to act."

It sounds like Rosa was a caring, upstanding, hardworking and humble woman. I believe she was. She also sounds a lot like Mother Teresa.

What was it that made both of these women so special? We can only speculate on what went on in Rosa's mind that particular morning on the bus as she found herself confronted by that imposing white person. I like to think what happened was that in that moment Rosa was acutely aware that her rights as a person were violated, and that knowledge crashed down on her like an inescapable waterfall.

Especially then black people lived in a state of oppression, and they knew it and felt it daily. I think the consciousness of the injustice was unbearable when she looked up into the face of that demanding

white person. This knowledge, in that moment, told her what she had to do, and she rose up and claimed her humanity as a black woman.

The qualities Rosa drew on were her inner strength and faith in God. Mother Teresa had those same qualities. Are these gifts only bestowed on the poor and famous?

I don't think so. These are gifts we all have and we all may lay claim to. Anyone passing through life deserves to claim gifts of inner strength and the faithfulness of God. And it takes those two qualities to make a difference in a suffering world. Injustice tends to be exposed by the people experiencing it. It tends not to be noticed by the oppressors until they are made aware of it. Our task as people who seek justice is to address injustice when we see it around us, by listening and acting on it.

Injustice is much like an onion. On the surface a situation may look smooth and simple. However, as soon as we scratch the surface we begin to see layers of complexity. When we begin to peel the layers away, one by one, we get to the core of the situation. And the core often exposes a much different view from our first impression.

Jennifer Granholm, the Governor of Michigan also spoke at Rosa's funeral. She stated that Rosa's mission is far from accomplished and then gave examples of the challenges facing society today. She said, "Rosa's mission will not be fulfilled until grade point averages in poor schools are similar to those in affluent schools, until there is a balance in racial representation in prisons, until poverty is non-existent, until sex trade is abolished, until the number of women and men are equal in the governing offices of the state and the corporations, and until a woman becomes the president of the United States."

The last statement was said tongue in cheek, as she smiled at senator Hillary Clinton sitting in the audience nearby.

And so we can all be Rosas. We all have the power within us to effect change, with the help of God. And there is lots to do.

As another speaker proclaimed: "The fight is still on though, the arena may be different. The struggle for equality may not be taking place in the streets in the same way as it did in Rosa's time, but it is still taking place. It is an ongoing struggle in our homes, work places and relationships. We have to keep on striving for justice and equality in all areas of our lives. We have to just keep on keeping on..."

And with that, the passionate crowd of people at Rosa's funeral embraced her power, sprang forth in glorious music and song, clapped their hands, danced, and praised the Lord God Almighty Hallelujah, for seven full hours!

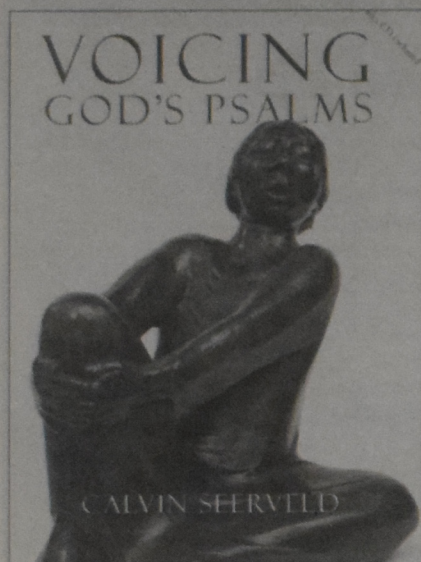
Thank you Rosa Parks, and also Mother Teresa, for serving as role models to us!



Vicky Van Andel is the editor of this column. Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact her via fax at 1-780-473-0970, or e-mail at: vickyv@telus.net

Review/Seasons

Christmas gift suggestions



Voicing God's Psalms

Calvin Seerveld
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, \$20 (164 pp)
ISBN 0-8028-2806-X

Want to hear the Psalms afresh, with a new ear as it were? Here's an ideal gift for the Christmas season – a vigorous translation that jars you awake with its fresh vocabulary. But there's more. There are insightful introductions to different kinds of Psalms (and a few other biblical songs as well). And there is a CD that enables you to listen to Cal Seerveld read some of his translations and provides the melody played on recorder or saxophone for those Psalms that have been versified so you can sing along. Some passages are also read by a choral group.

This new volume of translations isn't just ideal for personal or family devotions, however; it's a great resource for worship committees. These Psalms are translated as biblical poems and will make any congregation perk up their ears and hear anew what God is saying to his people.

It's a book for every church library.

For more info and to order, see: http://webapps.calvin.edu/worship/pub/voicing_psalms.php

He's Here

Jeanine Noyes

For a Christmas CD with a difference. This is not a record of traditional Christmas carols; yet, there is something about the way Jeanine Noyes sings her songs, some composed by herself, that speaks of even older traditions. They are haunting and simple, owing something, I think, to the folk tradition. Like Seerveld's readings of the Psalms, Noyes rendition of the Christmas message makes you hear with new ears.

For those of you familiar with Brookstone's 2000 Candles, Jeanine Noyes was part of that outstanding Christmas celebration.

To listen to a sample, go to: <http://www.jeaninenoyes.com/recordings.php>

Startling Joy: Seven Magical Stories of Christmas

James Calvin Schaap
Revell, \$14.99 (160p)
ISBN 0-8007-1877-1

Schaap's novels *Romey's Place* and *Touches the Sky* have given hope to those who believe that Christian fiction can indeed be literary and beautifully written. Here he offers seven stand-alone stories that quietly herald the meaning of Christmas. Walter Wangerin in the foreword describes them as stories that inscribe "sacred mystery into our common lives."

From the opening story, in which an annoyingly talkative bus driver causes reflection on the "startling joy" of Christ's unexpected incarnation, to the last, in which a crusty theater professor discovers anew the meaning of the second chapter of Luke after a Christmas pageant performance, these stories aren't merely touching but deeply theological. Schaap builds from everyday situations and everyday folks. His characters are flawed and real individuals who experience glimpses of grace in the midst of their own pain and selfishness. Schaap manages to make his points about forgiveness, joy and grace in subtle, humorous ways without preaching at the reader.

Over the last couple of months, in our office we've been enjoying a CD of hymns sung by the

Calvin College Alumni Choir

These would make an excellent Christmas gift.

Hear Our Prayer (2004)
Pearl Shangkuan, conductor
Kenneth Bos, accompanist
CD \$15

A few years ago, the choir also issued:
The Gift of Christmas (1998)
Charles K. Smith, conductor
Kenneth Bos, accompanist
CD \$15

<http://www.calvin.edu/alumni/groups/choir/record.htm>

At home we have also been listening to Dordt College. For a great deal, you can get a package of 6 CDs recorded by the

Dordt College Concert Choir

Be Thou Exalted Lord
by Dordt College Music
SKU: 10031827
6CDs - \$33.50
<https://secure.dordt.edu/xcart/home.php>

Every single leaf
The fastidious gardener's obsession

Clint Sherwood

It sort of started last week, but the official leaf clearing begins in earnest today. The maple at the end of the drive is all done – bright yellow leaves drifting down for two weeks, now dull and sullen at the base of the forlorn tree. The oaks stubbornly resist and won't give up their last until they festoon the glistening crust of an early snow. All the rest fill in the weeks of raking and bagging and dragging to the curb for pick up.



It wasn't always like this. In a simpler time leaves were recreation. My sister and neighbor would leap and squeal and fall and carelessly spread out the carefully raked pile. My mother didn't seem to mind, but would hand us rakes to recreate the pile until we grew weary, or got poked by an unseen stick. Then a single match set the pile ablaze, and pungent smoke carried memories of summer high, high up into a clear autumn sky.

Now it's all just dragged out to the curb, and like everything else in our well-tended world becomes just another check-off on our to-do list.

The neighbors next door embrace the ethos of this well-tended world with a passion. The tools of their trade alternate by seasons. Beginning in winter, the snow barely lands before being consumed in the hungry maw of a roaring snow blower, often heard four or five times during and after a single storm. Continuing in early summer, streams of water issue from hoses and sprinklers. Pollen and dust are carefully flushed off every flat surface. Lawns and gardens and trees drown daily in a continual assault that often lasts well past summer's late fading light.

And of course this worship of tidiness finds its ultimate expression in the annual rite of fall – the clearing of the leaves. The deafening jet-turbine whine of the electric leaf blower is heard evenings and weekends and even in rainstorms.

Yes; even in rainstorms. I chortled with another neighbor over the fence recently, she having noticed this odd behavior as well.

But there's something else here as well; something of a picture perhaps for our consideration. Certainly the changing of

the seasons has been perpetual metaphorical fodder for artists of all stripes. Poets can't help it, spring and love just go together. And of course we naturally notice in the gray days of late autumn a solemn portrait of the gray heads of the aged.

Most of us will reach that autumn of life. Old folks tell us it comes much more quickly than we can perhaps imagine. Suddenly one day we notice a yard full of brown leaves. Our regretful past appears before our eyes, a seeming infinite sea of lost opportunities and spoiled moments and rash judgments and ridiculous quarrels with loved ones and tearful moments at gravesides of those to whom we wished we'd been kinder.

A life spread out before us, when we notice the fastidious gardener. Head down, every leaf meticulously being gathered into a sack. Not one is left – not one regret, not one lost opportunity, not one silent curse, not one lustful look, not one covetous thought. All are gathered into the sack. He glances your way and the blood rises in your face. All are being gathered. Seemingly countless millions of them. Day-by-day they piled up unseen, exponentially more than we ever imagined or could have confessed in a thousand lifetimes.

And you just know where he's headed next. Not for disposal, but for terrifying display. All will be presented before a righteous Judge. Your life; all our squandered lives will shortly be piled before the consuming Fire. The gardener's hungry grin spreads as the sack fills, now nearly to the top. His aim is your utter destruction in the inferno of your own foolishness.

But even as we and that now hopelessly full sack prepare for the inevitable rendezvous, another Gardener appears. Ignoring the chattering, outraged protests of this one who labored a long lifetime to gather every leaf into his bag, the Gardener grasps the sack just as the last leaf drops in. He walks to a strangely bare tree around which are piled countless other sacks. Your sack, once so large, now becomes lost and remarkably proportional to all the others. You notice rocks marked by dull brown stains around the periphery of the pile. You notice similar stains on the tree. And on the Gardener's hands.

A faint hope rises in your chest. A flame appears in the Gardener's hand and he touches the pile. A deafening roar and a blinding flash crush you to the ground. Surely you have died. Surely you are lost forever. But now a hand touches your back. You glance up. Your sack is gone. The pile is gone. The brown stains are gone. The fastidious gardener is gone.

All that's left is the pungent smell of smoke, now curling in wisps around the tree and into a bright blue sky of forgetfulness.

Pastoral

Don't sell that parsonage!

Tymen Hofman

Your first reaction to this title might be that I am not in touch with reality. All the parsonages owned by the churches have about been sold. I'm trying to close the door after the horse is out of the barn!

Could be — I haven't tried to count church parsonages. But let's assume that there are still some left, and some on the way to being sold.

That parsonages have been provided historically comes from the provisions of the call letter that the church will relieve its minister from "all earthly cares" by providing him a residence. Today that can be taken care of by "a housing allowance."

Cobi and I are living quite comfortably in our retirement home, purchased when we were within a couple of years of my retirement and living in a parsonage. Buying that house did pose a few problems at the time, but in looking back over a 36-year ministry, I'm very pleased I didn't fall into the scheme of buying a house and living in it while in the active ministry.

Not that I didn't have the opportunity. Of the six churches I served, three gave us the option of buying, with the church paying a housing allowance which would, supposedly, cover the cost of interest on a mortgage, upkeep and taxes. The first was in the metropolis of Los Angeles, the second in Grand Rapids, and the third in the Chicago area. All were well-meant offers. Some might even have come with help for a down-payment had I suggested it, but after initial serious consideration, we opted for the age-old way of the church parsonage.

In each case the church had no parsonage and was required to provide one. Two of those parsonages were sold later. A mistake, I fear.

The argument for the minister buying his own house is that in this way he is able to grow some equity in a home so that when he retires he doesn't have to pay the "big bucks" for housing in a market that usually has gone higher through the years. So come retirement time, the house he buys is possibly two or three times as costly as if he had bought a house early in his ministry.

That is a fair enough argument, of course. A minister who lives within his means and saves some money, or has a bit of an inheritance, can buy a house. One less favored and less able to save will



Former Grandville Avenue CRC parsonage

be in a bind. He may end up in a trailer park.

Building committees also love to get rid of parsonages. After all, keeping the occupants happy is not always a bowl of cherries.

But at this point all the pros for this proposition have been exhausted.

The downside begins with the minister having to expend a considerable amount of time and energy and concern with the purchase and maintenance of his dwelling. Now if the church can assure him of a 40-hour week, no problem. But had I been limited to that amount of time-investment, I would have neglected a lot of work which I should have done, and that would have robbed the church of much very fruitful ministry. Either that or my wife, who was very involved in the hospitality of the ministry, would have been stuck with working and worrying about "the house." These are the earthly cares from which the minister should be spared.

But there are other problems. Few ministers are so competent that they can stay in a congregation for 20 or more years. That means that the average minister serves best if he moves after four to eight years. So nothing should interfere with the decision as to when and where to relocate. And what goes into making that decision?

Let me suggest that owning my own house would have been a fairly large incentive to stay rather than to move. Had we owned a home in Grand Rapids when I received the call to Tinley Park, I confess that selling my house would have been a problem, with six years left before retirement. I likely could have hung in there

for that last hurrah. But it would have been a mistake. Because I was free of that earthly care, however, I could make a decision purely on the basis of my ministerial calling. Or maybe I'd have loved my house so much that I wouldn't want to leave it. A real conflict of interest! Not good!

But there are other problems with ministerial ownership. How, pray tell, will a young candidate, often loaded with educational debt, come up with a down payment on an adequate house? (The church with a parsonage will have great appeal to one called directly out of seminary.) Once he is settled in a congregation and owns his own house, he is not without problems. Should he conclude that he should move on, either for a greater challenge or because of a less than fruitful ministry, he is subject to the market. Say he bought at a time of high prices, and now things are in a slump. And in, say four years, the realtor takes out two commissions, one at time of purchase and one at sale, where does that poor soul go for solution? Beats me.

Then that retirement kitty begins to disintegrate before his very eyes. Earthly cares, I would suggest; the kind he was promised he would be spared. Not wanting to see their minister suffer, the church will likely have to buy him out. Either that or he will decide to stay when he should move. His monetary gain or loss becomes a major factor in making a ministerial decision. Bad situation.

Now it is clear to me that something should be done to provide for a minister's retirement housing when he has lived in a parsonage during his ministry. This can be provided, I believe, without cost-

Looking for God

*It's not your job to decide who God is
or if you think everything is fair.*

*When you make God in your head
and think that is the God you can or can't believe,
it doesn't change who he is.*

*To know him you want to look at
every source that tells you about him:
the grasshopper's eye
flight migration impulses
juice bursting from a sweet plum.*

*You'll want to hear his tender words of love:
"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you."
"Come to me when you're weary".*

*Feel his sadness when you ignore him
his father heart yearning for a conversation
'I love you even if I can read your thoughts'.*

*Watch as he bends the scarlet folds of his blood
over the indelible creases of your sins
until they are bleached like white sheets in sunshine.*

God on the side

*God on the side
my life comes first
this this and that to do
and may God bless it*

*to shift the center
to God dwelling
God in
involved with the first decisions
the beginning of the day
the work
the plans
the holidays*

Linda Siebenga

ing the church any additional money. In most states and provinces, church property is not taxed. This will likely continue as long as the Roman Catholic Church continues to have political clout. That means the cost to the church of owning a parsonage is less than if the minister owns his own home, by the amount of tax paid by the minister. Assuming that the church covers the cost of the minister owning his own house, it will pay for his taxes as well, indirectly. So having a parsonage saves the church money.

So to help the minister lay up some equity for buying a house when he retires, a very simple and

effective way would be to determine what the taxes would be on the parsonage if it were owned by the minister and put that amount into an annuity in the minister's name. He would take this with him when leaving one pastoral charge and going to the next one.

If each congregation would follow this good practice, after 35 years of service he would have a very nice nest-egg in order to buy his simple retirement home. Seems wise and doable to me. In this way a minister would be freed from many earthly cares and do a lot more work for the church.

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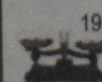
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Classified Rates

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 9 a.m. Tuesday, 13 days prior to publication date.

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rose@christiancourier.ca

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ads@christiancourier.ca

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CC reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format and editing style. Please provide us with clear copy. CC is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.

Anniversary



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40th Anniversary

November 27, 2005

Julius & Colleen – Josephine
Elden & Julie – Carly, Shaelyn, Justine
Jared & Kate – Hannah
Ezra & Robbi

1 Samuel 7:12 "...Hitherto, the Lord has helped us."

Thank you to family and extended family.

Correspondence: 166 John St S PO BOX#17
Harriston ON N0G 1Z0

Obituaries

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.
Psalm 48:1

After a short and courageous fight with cancer, our colleague

HENNIE (Hendrikje) RUSTENBURG
(nee van Dyk)

died peacefully at her home
on November 6, 2006 at the age of 57 years.
She was an employee of Shalom Manor
for almost 22 years.

May our God of comfort surround her husband, the children and grandchildren with his loving arms.

Shalom Manor Activation Department:

Rev. George van Arragon
Nellie van der Velde
Corinne Sprong
Ineke Bezuyen
Andrea Dunham
Debbie Schilstra
Bernice Robson
Evelien Zwaan
Pamela Jansen
Sarah Klumpenhauer

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October 28, 1919
Koekange

October 22, 2005
Brampton

GEERTJE FLUIT (nee Steenbergen)

"The Lord is my Shepherd"

Peacefully at Holland Christian Homes, the Lord took home his child, Geertje Fluit in her 86th year, beloved wife of 64 years to Klaas Fluit and cherished mother of:

Bert & Dianne (Ayr)
Ralph & Ann (Westhill)
Andy & Aileen (London)
Henry & Ann (Cambridge)
Roy (Mississauga)
Sue & Ian Talsma (Brampton)
Dear grandmother of 16 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

Also survived by sisters Doreen Lopers of Drayton; Lammie VanMulligan & Tinye Ottow both of the Netherlands.

Correspondence may be forwarded to: K. Fluit
#518 Trinity Tower; Holland Christian Homes
7900 McLaughlin Road
Brampton ON L6Y 5A7

November 26
Music, Art, and Crafts Festival

at Grace CRC, 25 Channel Nine Court,
Scarborough from 4 - 9 P.M.
Chamber music concert featuring Amanda
Goodburn, violin, Patricia Hiemstra, cello,
Mary VanderVennen, piano from 7 - 8 P.M.
Freewill offering to support work with
Romanian orphans.

December 11, 2005
Dutch Service

will be held in the
Ancaster Christian
Reformed Church
at 3:00 p.m.
Rev. Henry DeBolster
will be preaching.



December 23, 8.00 pm
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HAMILTON, ON
2ND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SING-A-LONG CONCERT

with the Liberation Choir.

This year's guests: the Ambassadors Male Choir. Organist: Willem van Suijdham,
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Guest Soprano Soloist: Melissa Gonsalves

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CHRISTIAN REFORMED
WORLD RELIEF
COMMITTEE

CRWRC

CIDA matching funds awarded to CRWRC

BURLINGTON, ON – The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) is one of six Canadian church relief agencies that received a boost from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in their efforts to aid Pakistan-India earthquake survivors.

A total of \$750,000 was approved from CIDA's South Asia Earthquake Matching Fund for Emergency Relief for Earthquake Affected People in Pakistan and India-Administered Kashmir. The funds will provide 54,000 earthquake survivors in Pakistan and India with blankets, winterized tents, clothing and kitchen utensils. CRWRC has already contributed \$100,000 CDN to this project over-and-above these matching funds.

CRWRC and its five partner organizations are operating through Action by Churches Together International (ACT), a global alliance of churches and related agencies working to save lives and support communities in emergencies worldwide. "Working together as Canadian churches strengthens our ability to practically support survivors of this terrible disaster", says Jacob Kramer, disaster response administrator at CRWRC. "At the same time, it strengthens our capacity to engage the Canadian public in response."

The other agencies approved for matching CIDA funds are Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada—ERDO (Emergency Relief & Development Overseas), PWRDF (The Anglican Church of Canada), Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) and the United Church of Canada (UCC). Together, the six churches have more than four million members in Canada.

For more information about these programs, please visit www.crwrc.org or call 1-800-730-3490.

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We are glad we have pictures for our eyes. We wish you well.

* Due to health reasons, the Kooijs will not be able to give concerts. Ad sponsored by a grateful fan.

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Interested applicants should send a current resume, statement of faith and statement of commitment to Christian education to:

Principal Search Committee
Maranatha Christian Academy
939 Northwood, Windsor ON N9E 1A2

Or by email to: micoletti@cogeco.ca

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Wallaceburg Christian School,
Principal Search Committee,
693 Albert St. Wallaceburg, ON N8A -1Y8.

The Christian Reformed Church (CRC) announces the initiation of a search process to fill the position of:

DIRECTOR

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) - Canada

It is anticipated that this senior executive position will be filled by actions of the Board of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

This position is responsible for the administration and implementation of the work of CRWRC in Canada and internationally, the promotion of CRWRC to its constituency, and maintaining an effective liaison with CRWRC – U.S. and other agencies of the CRCNA.

The successful candidate should have a strong sense of compassion for the poor and a commitment to working collaboratively within a bi-national structure. Experience working with international partners and/or in another cross-cultural context is essential. The qualified applicant should have university degree (Masters preferred) with 10 years management experience in a non-profit environment.

In keeping with principles of gender and racial equity, all candidates will be considered based upon their qualifications and experience.

To nominate individuals in writing or to confidentially apply for this position, send a copy of your resume and a letter of interest by **December 15, 2005** to the mailing or email address below.

To obtain more information about the position or the selection process, request an application packet from the mailing or email address below.

Shirley Vandenberg, Chair
Search Committee
c/o CRWRC – Canada
3475 Mainway, PO Box 5070, STN LCD 1
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

Fax: 905-336-8344
Email: crwrc-search@crcna.ca

Additional information can be found on the CRCNA website at www.crcna.org or CRWRC website at www.crwrc.org.

Applicants will be considered until the Search Committee has made its selection of a nominee.

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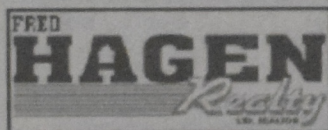
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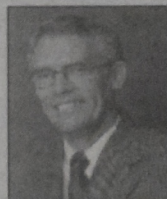
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Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	94

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Brooks - CIBQ	8:30 am	1340
Ft. McMurray - CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton - CICA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock - CFOK	7:30 am	1370

SASKATCHEWAN

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Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach - CHSM	9:30 am	1250
Winnipeg - CKJS	9:00 am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan - CFAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham - CFCO	6:30 am	630
Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820
Kapuskasing - CKAP	7:00 am	580
London - CKSL	7:00 am	1410
Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound - CFOS	7:00 am	560
Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Sarnia - CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Stratford - CJCS	8:45 am	1240
Tilsonburg - CKOT	9:02 am	101.3
Windsor - CKLW	7:30 am	800
Wingham - CKNX	10:30 am	920
Woodstock - CJFH	7:30 am	94.03

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFCY	7:00 am	630
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NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater - CKBW	7:30 am	1000
Digby - CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Halifax - CFDR	8:30 am	780
Liverpool - CKBW	7:30 am	94.5
Kentville - CKEN	8:30 am	1490
Middleton - CKAD	8:30 am	1350
New Glasgow - CKEC	7:30 am	1320
Shelburne - CKBW	7:30 am	93.1
Sydney - CJCW	7:00 am	1270
Weymouth - CKDY	8:30 am	103.1
Windsor - CFAB	8:30 am	1450

TELEVISION Primary Focus

ON CTS Sat. - 7:30pm

AB Lethbridge - CJIL Thurs. - 9:00pm

Kids Corner Radio



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High River/Calgary CHRB 1140 AM Sun. 4:30pm
Nordegg CHBW 93.9 FM Sun. 8:30 am
Rocky Mtn. House CHBW 94.5 FM Sun. 8:30 am

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Prince Rupert. CIAJ 100.7 FM Sat. 10 am

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Steinbach CHSM 1250 AM Sun. 4 pm

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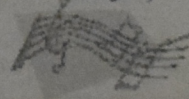
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20:00-21:00hrs (The Dutch Program)
KINGSTON CFRC 101.9FM
Sun: 12:00hrs (Zingend Geloven)
Sat: 09:00hrs (Holland Calling)
BELLEVILLE - CJLX 101.9FM & 92.3FM
Sun. 19:00hrs (Zingend Geloven) 19:30
(Holland Calling)
VANCOUVER, BC - CJVB 1470AM
Mon - Wed. 20:00-21:00hrs
EDMONTON, AB - CKER 101.9FM
Sat. 09:00-10:00hrs (Religious)
10:00-12:00hrs
(50's-70's Dutch Pop Music)
11:00 (Dutch news & sports)
WINNIPEG, MB - CKJS 910AM
Sat. 19:00-19:30hrs
(The Dutch Program)



Events/Advertising

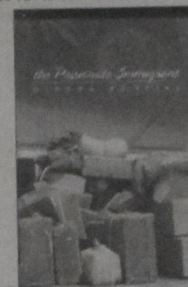
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Nov. 18** "Zingend Geloven" presents the Annual Dutch Christmas Hymn Sing, 7:30 p.m. at Holland Christian Homes, Heritage Hall, **Brampton**, Ont. With participation of the Mattaniah Choir, Herman den Hollander, Director; Andre Knevel, Organist; Lenny Dykstra, Song Leader and Rev. Jacob Kuntz, meditation. Free will offering. Info: 905-640-8929.
- Nov. 26** Music, Art, and Crafts Festival at Grace CRC, 25 Channel Nine Court, **Scarborough** from 4 - 9 P.M. Chamber music concert featuring Amanda Goodburn, violin, Patricia Hiemstra, cello, Mary VanderVen-nen, piano from 7 - 8 p.m. Freewill offering to support work with Romanian orphans.
- Dec. 2** Christmas Concert, 7:30 p.m. Georgetown Christian Reformed Church 11611 Travalgar Road Georgetown, Ont. Featuring: **Brampton**. See ad this issue for details
- Dec. 4** Dutch Christmas Song Service, Emmanuel CRC, 170 Clarke St., **Woodstock**, Ont. 7:30 p.m. See ad this issue.
- Dec. 11** Dutch Service will be held in the **Ancaster** Christian Reformed Church at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Henry DeBolster will be preaching.
- Dec. 14** Christmas at Home with the Ambassadors. First CRC, **Hamilton**, 8 pm. See next issue for details
- Dec. 17** A Christmas present for you; a Christmas present for Sierra Leone. A medley of folktales, music, laughter and sometimes poignancy are unleashed as wooden shoes meet flip flops and classic tunes. An evening of laughter, delight and celebration of God's goodness in the midst of sometimes anguish. 7:30 p.m. at Calvin CRC, 1475 Merivale Road, **Ottawa**. Please see next issue for details.
- Dec. 23** 2nd annual Christmas sing-a-long concert with the Liberation Choir, 8:00 pm at Central Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, ON. See details in ad this issue.

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Christmas Concert

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"Choraliers"

Soloist

Under direction of Robert Kinnear

Accompanist: Sarah Ryan

Special Guest:

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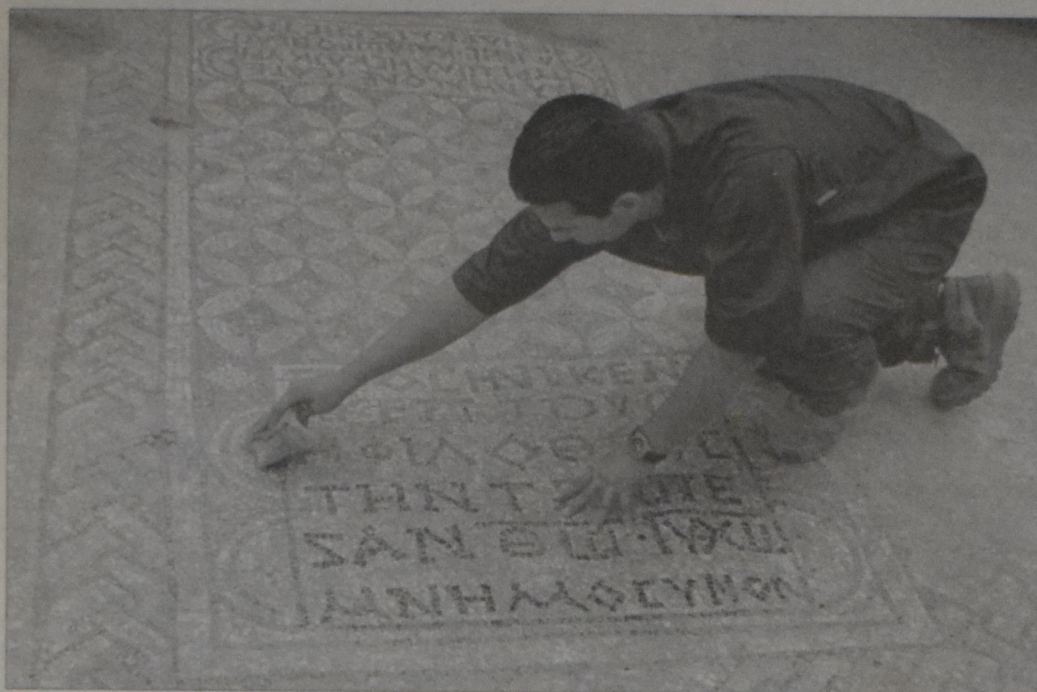
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News



Michele Green

Jerusalem (ENI) – Israeli archaeologists have uncovered near a prison what they believe could be the oldest church ever found in the Holy Land – a discovery that experts say may shed new light on early Christianity.

The structure was discovered in Megiddo, lower Galilee, near a site traditionally believed to be the Armageddon described in the New Testament's Book of Revelation, where the final battle between good and evil is prophesied to occur.

Dating back to around the third century, the church was discovered during an archaeological dig in the grounds of the Megiddo Prison where Israel jails hundreds of Palestinian security prisoners along with ordinary convicts. Inmates detailed to work on an excavation discovered it.

The small, rectangular building lacks the characteristics of later churches. But it contains mosaics said to be breathtaking including one of a fish design. It also contains a Greek inscription that mentions a woman called Ekeptos who "donated this table to the God Jesus Christ in commemoration."

"It's a historic discovery that serves as confirmation to Christians all over the world," Archbishop Pietro Sambì, the Vatican's envoy to the Holy Land, told Israeli television.

It appears that a table rather than an altar stood at the centre of the church at which a sacred meal was held to commemorate the Last Supper of Jesus. Researchers said the apparent use of a table sheds new light on early Christian rituals. "This is a unique and important structure that expands our understanding of the early period of Christianity as a recognized and official religion," said Jotham Tefer, who supervised the excavation.

Other Greek inscriptions in the church include a dedication to a Roman officer who paid for the floor of the structure as well as a dedication to four women.

The building is believed to be one of the oldest Christian holy sites in the region. Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the traditional site of the crucifixion, dates to about AD 330 but it contains only scant remains of the original structure.

"Christian religious structures from this period are a rare archaeological find in Israel," Tefer said. The mosaics were so rare archaeologists said they would

have to compare them with discoveries in Antioch or Rome rather than Christian mosaics found locally which are from slightly later periods.

Christian scholars say the building could provide a wealth of information on early Christianity practised in the Holy Land in the first two centuries after the crucifixion.

"Of course, all Christians are convinced of the history of Jesus Christ," Sambì said. "But is it extremely important to have archaeological proof of a church dedicated to him? Certainly."

In a best-selling book, Abbe Pierre, one of France's best-known Roman Catholic priests, confesses that he has not kept his vow of celibacy. Writing about sexual desire, he admits "on rare occasions I gave in to it."

He adds: "But I never had a long-term liaison because I did not allow sexual desire to take root. That would have meant living in a lasting relationship with a woman and would have been contrary to my chosen way of life."

Startling, to think that this view of sexual desire makes it more virtuous to have one-night stands than to enter into a faithful relationship.

But in his book he favors the abolition of obligatory celibacy for priests and he also sees no theological obstacle to the ordination of women. This puts him a little out of step with the Vatican, but what is Rome going to do about a slightly heretical 93-year-old priest who is as popular in his home country as a soccer star?

Medical science has been studying those who live well beyond their three score and ten years (actually, most of us in North America are living to almost 78). While they are not setting aside such tried-and-true formulas as eat the right foods and exercise, they're adding another dimension, or actually two – the psychological and the social.

A lot depends on how we deal with stress. Long-term stress affects the way you process sugars, causes high blood pressure and blood clots, and wreaks havoc with your immune system, to mention only a few side-effects.

Upbeat, optimistic people tend to deal with stress better than those who worry and nurture bitter feelings. But having strong family and social relationships also is a great help coping with stress.

Various studies have also shown that it is better stress-wise to be rich and educated than poor and uneducated, that it is better to be in a position of authority in the workplace than one of the poor peons who are always getting dumped on, and that it is better to be married than single. The last is true especially for men; for women the difference isn't nearly as great.

However, it isn't the practical support of relationships, such as having somebody to cook for you or drive you to a doctor's appointment, that seems to make the most difference. Those who have a high frequency of emotional support – meaning they spoke and met often with family and friends – do better in terms of health. Having friends and family in your life increases the likelihood that you will get out more, keep moving and actually improve with age, rather than decline.

A study of nuns, all of whom shared a similar lifestyle, shows that those who have a positive attitude, a sense of humor and who are more adaptable to change not only live longer but keep their wits longer as well. Of course, they also had a better boss than most of us.

The prospects of a flu pandemic that will kill millions and wreak havoc with considerably more than Kentucky Chicken franchises is sending those responsible for dealing with large scale medical emergencies into a dither. But all the media attention is also causing a great deal of stress for many people. Although avian flu has not crossed from fowl to featherless bipeds (humans), people have been made fearful enough to start storing up tamiflu and other medications. In a couple of years it has killed some 80 people. That's probably about as many who died during that period from overly vigorous tooth-brushing. The media have been fronting stories that the next epidemic could kill 20 percent of the population and lead to the collapse of our entire economy and social system.

Just thinking about it has probably already shortened the lives of many of our worry-wart citizens. Maybe I can find a lawyer who will file a class-action lawsuit against the prophets of doom who are shaving years off my life-expectancy. But I'll probably chicken out.

